Hafa Adai!

SUNDAY

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Are you looking forward to this year's holiday season?

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54 DAYS without a government budget for FY 2009

INSIDE

Obama's Man

President-elect Barack Obama intends to name Timothy Geithner, president of the New York Federal Reserve, as his treasury secretary to confront the nation's intense economic turmoil, senior Democratic officials said Friday.

UNITED STATES...Page 17

High Seas Menace

The Saudis chose to negotiate. The Indian navy opened fire. The U.S. navy said shipping companies should do more to protect their vessels, and the ship owners said governments should guard the high seas.

FOCUS...Page 20

'AG should have signed off on federalization suit'

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

An attorney for the Senate has maintained that the governor's "federalization" lawsuit against the U.S. government should not have been filed without the CNMI Attorney General's written authorization.

Senate legal counsel Michael Ernest, in an opinion for Sen. Maria Frica Pangelinan, said the AG "must authorize the filing of any lawsuit brought on behalf of the CNMI, or any of its agencies."

The legal opinion was issued amid questions whether it was legal for the Fitial administration to sue the federal government on behalf of the Commonwealth

See CONSTITUTION on Page 4

AP

Senate Majority Harry Reid of Nev., second from right, accompanied by Democratic leaders, gestures during a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, Nov. 20, 2008.

EARLY THANKSGIVING NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

The CNMI's senior citizens are served roasted turkey during an early Thanksgiving Day luncheon treat Wednesday at the Office On Aging.

Automakers need to make case for government aid

RELATED NEWS

Obama keeps low profile in auto rescue talks.
Page 17

By KEN THOMAS
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—Democratic leaders ordered Detroit's Big Three automakers Friday to submit what amounts to a detailed loan application to Congress so lawmakers can decide whether to give the beleaguered industry an emergency $25 billion lifeline.

See BAILOUT on Page 4

New rules for remittance centers proposed

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

As remittance numbers decrease and companies close, the Department of Commerce is proposing new regulations for remittance and foreign exchange companies.

The proposed regulation changes currently are listed in the Commonwealth Register.

"As remittances go down because not many people are remitting out, we're going to see companies close, and when we see companies closing we don't want to see them leaving with all of this liability out there," said Commerce Sec-

See BOND on Page 4

CUC currently unable to use Rydlyme

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. still is planning to use the thousands of gallons of the chemical Rydlyme that remain unused and stored on Saipan and Rota, but need to find the time and have the available engines running, said CUC executive director Antonio Muna.

See RYDLYME on Page 4

Revitalized Susupe Beach Park launched. **PAGE 2**
House committee asks for explanation on gas prices. **PAGE 3**

Around the CNMI

Revitalized Susupe Beach Park launched

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

A rejuvenated Susupe Beach Park was returned to the community during its formal re-launching yesterday—just in time for this week's Thanksgiving celebration.

Tan Holdings Corp., led by its president and CEO Jerry Tan, cleaned up the area two weekends last October and this month—removing trash and unwanted debris, fixing and splattering new paint on the pavilions, and even replacing the roof of the main stage that was blown away by a storm years back.

The addition of a new roof for the stage—made with the help of contractor Reliance Construction—was one of the highlights of the restoration project.

See REVITALIZED on Page 4

Tan Holdings Corp. president and CEO Jerry Tan, third right, leads the ribbon-cutting ceremony in the re-launching celebration of the newly refurbished Susupe Beach Park yesterday. Joining him are MVA managing director Perry Tenorio, Rep. Raymond Palacios, Rep. Oscar Babauta, Tan Holdings senior vice president Eli Arago, and Century Insurance president David Sablan. Event emcee Lynn Knight, Tan Holdings vice president for corporate affairs, is shown at left.
NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ

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House committee asks for explanation on gas prices

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

MATH WIZARDS
Students from Saipan International School won over 20 ribbons at the last Math Court Competition on Nov. 8.

By KRISTI EATON
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rep. Joseph C. Reyes says he has growing concerns about the price of gasoline in the CNMI.

Reyes, in a letter to Shell Marianas and Mobil Marianas officials, asked why gas prices are 30 cents to 50 cents more than in 2007, when crude oil was trading at similar prices.

"Gasoline prices seem to be $.30 to $.50 a gallon higher this than they were in 2007 when oil was trading for the same price, Can you explain this?" the chairman of the Committee on Commerce and Tourism wrote. "Also, why are gas prices on Saipan consistently $.13 a gallon higher than Guam? Tinian prices are $.54 a gallon higher than Saipan and Rota prices are $1.00 a gallon higher than Saipan! Surely this can't be just the cost to ship and unload fuel from the same tanker."

He added, "we realize that there may be some delays reacting to the fluctuations in oil prices, but inflation alone cannot account for the disparity seen in just one year."

An official from Shell earlier said oil prices have dropped faster than the company has been able to recover their costs.

Commerce Secretary Michael Ada said the CNMI has fuel capacity issues.

"We don't have the storage that Guam does or Hawaii does," he said. "Which means they don't have to order as often as we do. If we have a smaller amount that we can store, in terms of fuel, that means we deplete it faster and have to order more often."

More orders mean more money spent on shipping, docking, and loading, he said.

"That's one of the reasons our prices are relatively higher, even in relation to Guam," Ada said.

South Pacific search fails to find 29 missing fishermen after abandoned vessel found

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—The New Zealand air force on Saturday suspended a three-day search covering thousands of square miles (kilometers) of the South Pacific after failing to locate 29 Asian fishermen who have been missing for weeks.

The air force launched its maritime search Thursday after the charred remains of a Taiwan-registered fishing boat were found abandoned near the South Pacific island nation of Kiribati earlier in the month.

The last radio transmission from the vessel—a personal call on a satellite phone from the captain to his wife in Taiwan—took place Oct. 28.

After more than 30 hours of searching across 21,000 square miles (54,000 square kilometers) of ocean "there is no sign of anything," Rescue Coordination Center spokesman Ross Henderson said. "There has been no luck today, unfortunately."

New Zealand air force spokesman Glenn Davis said the crew was taking a mandatory rest day in Vanuatu on Sunday, while search and rescue agencies in New Zealand and Fiji "reviewed the effort and determined whether to resume searching Monday."

Squadron Leader Mike Pearson said the P-3K2 Orion crew had thoroughly searched the area, including small uninhabited islands. "If they had been in this area we would have seen them because the weather and sea conditions have been good so far," Pearson said.

Henderson said Fiji was also sending officials to a number of small islands located north of Kiribati that are sparsely inhabited by indigenous tribes with no modern means of communications, to see if any of the crew had come to shore. The result of those missions were not yet known.

A Korean fishing crew found the deserted vessel—which had Taiwanese, Chinese, Filipino and Indonesian crew—drifting near Kiribati's Phoenix Islands on Nov. 9. Three life rafts and a rescue boat were missing from the *Ta Ching 21*—seen by searchers as a positive sign that the crew was able to abandon ship safely.

A U.S. air force C-130 Hercules aircraft searched the area on Nov. 12 without success and the New Zealand air force resumed the search operation Thursday.

Rescue and air force officials have made no comment on the possibility of the crew's survival.

Joanne Tawney: You are a Great Kid and your Mother & Father and Grandma & Grandpa think of you daily. Barka dog still looks for you and still chases the rabbits. 13 can be rough on a kid but no matter what just stay true to yourself. You are the greatest kido and what you are feeling is normal [not fun] but normal. We all go threw it So just keep smiling Kid and enjoy life. We all miss you kido! Colorado misses you! Oh by the way the 4 boys in Cedaredge are still heartbroken. Your one friend in Denver is getting his trunk fixed, can you imagine that? *Love the Tawney family*

Bridge Capital offers to buy $20M bond for Guam Gov

By KRISTI EATON
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Bridge Capital, LLC, in a letter to the Guam Economic Development and Commerce Authority, said it would be willing to consider purchasing a $20 million bond to help the Guam Government meet a federal court order.

"Bridge Capital, LLC would be willing to consider purchasing a bond or bonds secured by the full faith and credit of the Government of Guam with a specified source of repayment revenue for that amount," the letter states.

The Guam Government was ordered to come up with the $20 million needed for a dump closure and landfill projects by Jan. 5, 2009. A financing plan must be agreed upon by Dec. 5, according to Guam's *Pacific Daily News*.

Bridge Capital, LLC, is an international lending and financial services firm headquartered on Saipan.

Amateur Radio Licensing exams this Wednesday

The next VE session offered by W5YI-VE sponsored by MDX Amateur Radio Club will be this Tuesday, Nov. 26, from 6pm to 8pm.

It will be held on the classroom of the American Red Cross NMI Chapter. For more information, contact Bong Malasarte (WH0X) at 287-5525 or e-mail at mdx@mdx-radio.net

Walk-ins will be accepted although pre-registration is encouraged. Those in the technician class who want to upgraded must bring the original and one photocopy of their FCC license and any applicable CSCEs.

A valid ID will also be required. If you do not have a photo ID, bring two ID forms at least one of which shows your current mailing address. The 2008 exam fee is $ 14 for all elements.

The exam session will be administered by the MDX Amateur Radio Club Volunteer Examiner under the W5YI Volunteer Coordinator.

VE's wanting to assist in the exams should bring their VE ID's. Only VE's with valid ID are allowed inside the examination session. ***(PR)***

Math placement test dates set

The Northern Marianas College will be conducting the Math Placement Tests on the following dates:

Jan. 6	10am - 12pm	Room: D-1
	5pm - 7pm	Room: D-1
Jan. 8	10am - 12pm	Room: D-1
	5pm - 7pm	Room: A-9
Jan. 13	10am - 12pm	Room: A-9
Jan. 15	5pm - 7pm	Room: A-9

No reservations needed—first come first served. No admittance to the testing room will be allowed after the starting times listed above.

Those who wish to take the test must bring a valid ID (Drivers License, passport or School ID), pens or pencils and a calculator (optional). There is a $25 fee for the Math Placement Test that must be paid in advance at the NMC Cashier Window at the Finance Office, located in Building N. Applicants will not be admitted to the testing room without proof of payment (a receipt for the placement test fee). NMC students are not allowed to take the placement test more than once. The only exception to this condition is for NMC students who have *not* taken a math class within one year of taking the math placement test.

Call the Sciences, Mathematics, Health & Athletics Department at (670) 234-5498 Ext. 1200 or 1212 for more information. ***(NMC)***

Tour package includes:

- Roundtrip economy ticket Saipan-Shanghai-Saipan
- 5-Star Hotel accommodations
- City tour: Yuhuan Garden, Jade Buddha Monastery, Oriental Pearl TV Tower, Chenghuang Market
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- Aircondition bus, entrance tickets, tour insurance, English speaking tour guide

Deadline: December 5, 2008

- Full payment
- Submission of passport 6mos valid and visa application with 2X2 picture
- Visa not included with package

Certain restrictions apply.

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Constitution prohibits hiring of outside counsel to represent govt

From Page 1

using a private law firm and without explicit approval by the local AG.

Ernest said he based his opinion on the CNMI Constitution, as he was unaware of any federal provision relevant to the issue.

First, he cited the constitutional provision on the Attorney General, which states that the AG "shall be responsible for providing legal advice to the governor and executive departments, [and] representing the Commonwealth in all legal matters…."

"[A] plain reading of the CNMI Constitution would seem to require the AG, and nobody else, to represent the CNMI in the federalization or any other lawsuit," Ernest said.

But he added that the Analysis of the Constitution, considered by CNMI courts as "highly persuasive as an interpretive tool," indicates that the drafters of the Constitution did not intend such a narrow reading of the provision.

Ernest went on to cite the Analysis, which states that while the AG, executive departments, and the governor may engage counsel from outside the CNMI government, the Constitution prohibits engaging outside counsel to represent the government "in any legal matter without a grant of authority from the attorney general."

He also pointed to another sentence in the Analysis, which says that an executive department may prosecute a criminal or civil action "only with the consent and through the representation of the attorney general."

Combining both sentences in the Analysis, Ernest said, "an argument could be made that outside counsel may represent the CNMI in litigation, but there must be a 'grant of authority' from the attorney general for the representation, and the Attorney General must maintain some sort of representation in the suit."

He added, "Of course, a court could focus solely on the second…sentence and reach a different conclusion. I read the two paragraphs together, and conclude that the outside firm can represent the CNMI in the litigation, but it must be with the explicit authority granted from the AG and the AG must maintain some minimal control over the litigation.

"I am unsure if that 'grant of authority' has occurred. Perhaps this issue could be cleared up with further investigation."

Acting Attorney General Gregory Baka, in a letter sent earlier to Rep. Tina Sablan, maintained that it is common practice for the AG's office to refer cases to private law firms for reasons such as conflicts, lack of specialized experience, or resource constraints. He added that this delegation is in full compliance with the Constitution and is not legally required to be in writing.

"Hundreds of pleadings are filed annually by the OAG without the AG's personal review or signature," Baka said. "Yet as the deputy attorney general, I did personally review and comment upon various drafts of the complaint in our Section 903 litigation."

Section 903 of the U.S.-CNMI Covenant allows either party to bring to court any dispute arising under the Covenant.

The U.S.-based law firm, Jenner & Block, and attorney Howard Willens, special legal counsel to Governor Fitial, are representing the CNMI government in its lawsuit over the labor provisions of the CNMI immigration federalization law.

Bond will be hiked from $50K to $100K

From Page 1

retary Michael Ada.

Under the proposed regulations, companies that transmit money would be required to make a $100,000 security deposit or bond. Currently, companies are required to make a $50,000 deposit or bond. Remittance companies also would be required to file electronic copies of their quarterly reports and provide more information in the reports, and comply with federal registration and reporting requirements.

Fees for foreign currency exchange companies and remittance companies would increase under the proposed regulations.

Currently, a company must pay $300 for a foreign exchange dealer license and $30 for an agent license. Under the proposed changes, foreign exchange companies would pay $300 for a dealer license and pay $50 for an agent license. Remittance companies would pay $300 for a license and $50 for a remittance agent license.

For companies desiring to withdraw their license, the new regulations would create strict guidelines, including submitting an application and placing a notice of intention to close in the newspaper with specific language.

Ada said he welcomes public comment on the possible changes.

Overseas remittances fell from $102.2 million in 2006 to $93.6 million in 2007. Meanwhile, four remittance companies closed their business in 2007, namely America Joint-Partner Corporation, Micronesia Money Exchange Co., Oceania Remittance Center, and Yun Mee Corporation.

3 engines should be working to use Rydlyme

From Page 1

Rydlyme, produced by Apex Engineering Products Corp., is intended to dissolve water scale deposits in cooling passages without dismantling the equipment or pipes.

CUC's alleged questionable purchase of thousands of gallons of Rydlyme has led to the indictment of Lt. Gov. Timothy Villagomez, his sister Joaquina Villagomez Santos, her husband James Santos, and former CUC executive director Anthony Guerrero.

According to the indictment, of the 8,175 gallons of Rydlyme that remain unused, at least 1,485 gallons are in storage on Rota.

CUC reportedly experienced damage to some equipment during the 1998 to 2000 purchase of the chemical.

Despite the presence of the chemical in a storage room on Rota, the indictment stated that CUC purchased an additional 3,000 gallons in 2007, using sole-source emergency purchase.

Three engines should be working to use the Rydlyme in order to allow for a safety net, Muna said.

The problem right now, Muna said, is that only two engines are working at Power Plant 1. With three engines working, one engine can be flushed with the Rydlyme, while the other two remain online. If one of the engines malfunctions, there is an additional engine available to continue to run, Muna said.

With only two engines, if one was to be flushed and something happened to the other engine, it could bring down the whole system.

"The way system works there has to be at least one engine up at Power Plant 1," he said.

Muna said CUC has been planning to flush the system since the Aggreko generators came online but have had difficulty getting three engines operational.

REVITALIZED

on Page 4

Volunteers also took the time to paint the walls and water tanks of Saipan Community School that faced the park.

"We wanted to do this on our own. As you can see, this is now a very beautiful park. The trees can shade the sun anytime of the day," said Tan.

Two of the district's lawmakers, Rep. Oscar Babauta and Rep. Raymond Palacios, as well as Sen. Luis Crisostimo and Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Perry Tenorio attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Tan said the revitalization of the Susupe Beach Park is the company's way of giving back to the community.

The re-lunching, he said, is very timely because next week is Thanksgiving and the Christmas season is coming up.

Tan also gave special thanks to the Tan Holdings management team that include Lynn Knight, Ivan Quichocho, Ed Arriola, and Eli Arago for the making the project a success.

He also gave kudos to Reliance Construction for helping them complete the revitalization of the Susupe landmark.

"I'm very happy to share this moment with you. We all can see a big difference now. If there's something else to add to the park, we are open for more suggestions," Tan said.

Susupe Beach Park encompasses three pavilions—one big and two smaller ones with a complete view of the ocean. There is also a big stage where people can organize events.

"We're really proud that we were able to restore this. We can continue to promote this place and we promise that we shall maintain this. We really made the right decision and are extremely excited but this is only the beginning," Tan said.

Rep. Babauta, for his part, said he hopes that youngsters would now use the park and appealed to them to make it a graffiti-free place.

"This is valuable to the community. We extend our appreciation to Tan Holdings Corp.," he said.

A trio of ukulele performers—Jonelie Torres, Jimin Ryu, and Bryan Cho—from Saipan Community School kicked off the musical program.

The Top 3 winners in the recently held "Best Dance Crew in the CNMI" competition—TNT, Final Extreme, and eventual winner I Candy—also attended the event.

Bailout plan should be accountable to taxpayers

From Page 1

In a letter to the auto executives released Friday afternoon, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid demanded a detailed accounting by Dec. 2 of the companies' financial condition and short-term cash needs, as well as how they would achieve long-term viability.

"The auto companies' shareholders, business partners and prospective benefactors—the American people—deserve to see a plan that is accountable to taxpayers and that is viable for the long-term," Pelosi, D-Calif., and Reid, D-Nev., wrote.

The Democrats also called on the automakers to show how they would ensure that the government would be reimbursed and share in future profits, eliminate dividends and lavish executive pay packages, meet fuel-efficiency standards, and address their health care and pension obligations to workers if they got the federal help.

The Bush administration sharply criticized the Democrats for departing Washington for a congressional recess without acting on a rescue for the car makers.

"How could they leave town when the auto companies were just here (this) week saying some of them were on the verge of running out of cash?" Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez said in an interview. "I think it's a very irresponsible attitude toward a very serious matter."

White House press secretary Dana Perino said it was "appalling that Congress decided to leave town without addressing a problem that they themselves said needed to be addressed."

And President George W. Bush himself went on the offensive—although with more reserved language—to press the point that leaders failed to grab onto a bipartisan proposal.

"Unfortunately, the leadership in Congress adjourned without even allowing this measure to come up for a vote," Bush said in his Saturday radio address, taped Friday and released early by the White House. "My position is clear: If the automakers are willing to make the hard decisions needed to become viable, they should be able to receive the funds Congress already allotted to them for other purposes."

After making an auto bailout a top priority of this week's brief postelection session, Democrats scrapped planned votes on a rescue plan they said lacked support—or a clear justification. They said their request for a plan from the Big Three was designed to give General Motors Corp., Ford Motor Co., and Chrysler LLC another chance—after a disastrous pair of hearings this week on Capitol Hill—to make their case to lawmakers and the public, Pelosi said.

"It's another opportunity for them to say to the American people, 'Give us your money, because we will put it to good use,'" Pelosi, D-Calif., told reporters.

Hearings are expected the week of Dec. 1 and lawmakers could consider legislation the following week, but only if the industry shows that taxpayers and auto workers would be protected, congressional leaders said.

Automakers have promised to submit the blueprint Democrats have demanded.

GM spokesman Greg Martin said they would meet Congress' deadline and were "ready to work through their concerns and to deliver the accountability the taxpayers deserve before committing support to the domestic auto industry."

U.S. automakers are struggling to stay afloat heading into 2009 amid an economic meltdown, a precipitous drop in sales and a tight credit market. The three companies burned through nearly $18 billion in cash reserves during the last quarter and GM and Chrysler have said they could collapse in weeks.

Detroit's car makers employ nearly a quarter-million workers, and more than 730,000 other workers produce materials and parts that go into cars. If just one of the automakers declared bankruptcy, some estimates put U.S. job losses next year as high as 2.5 million.

Congress is weighing a tricky political question: Should it spend billions more on unpopular government bailouts or run the risk of bearing the blame of a U.S. auto industry meltdown?

Bush and congressional Republicans said lawmakers should have considered a bipartisan plan to let the automakers tap a separate $25 billion loan program for fuel-efficient cars for their short-term cash needs.

Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky described Democrats' stop-and-start attempts to push through the auto bailout as a "bizarre and confusing" spectacle. He said the White House-backed plan "would be a way to get a law," but he wouldn't say whether he believes Congress should return next month to address auto industry's predicament.

"I think we all accept that they're in serious trouble. No one is happy about that. But what to do about it remains to be seen," McConnell said.

Supporters of the bipartisan measure to temporarily divert the fuel-efficiency funds to cover the auto companies' operations are hopeful of winning support in December.

But Pelosi reiterated her opposition to that approach, which is vehemently opposed by environmentalists jealously guarding that money for the development of cars that use less gasoline.

"It's like taking your kids' college education fund and spending it on your credit card bills," Pelosi said.

Gutierrez said it's more like dipping into a terminally ill child's college fund to pay for lifesaving surgery.

"There will be time to replenish the fund, but what really matters is to save the life of the child," the Commerce secretary said.

Democratic leaders acknowledged Thursday that their favored approach—carving the $25 billion in loans from the $700 billion Wall Street bailout fund—lacked enough support in Congress, particularly after the auto executives' poor performance in high-profile appearances on Capitol Hill.

The chief executives of the Big Three urged lawmakers to sign off on the loans this week, saying the economic meltdown had staggered their industry after they had taken steps to restructure and produce more fuel-efficient cars.

But they were roundly criticized for traveling aboard corporate jets to seek billions in government aid and failing to assure lawmakers they wouldn't need more money.

Science confab at AMP this Tuesday

The CNMI public is invited to the upcoming annual general meeting of the Asia Pacific Academy of Science, Education and Environmental Management, formerly the Western Pacific Academy of Science and Environmental Management. The conference/science presentations will occur at the indoor auditorium in American Memorial Park on Tuesday, Nov. 25, from 6:30pm to 9:30pm. Each presentation is scheduled for approximately 20 minutes with a five-minute question-and-answers session will follow.

Scheduled speakers and topics include:

■ Ms. Haldre Rogers, Ph.D.-Graduate Student, University of Washington Biology Department. "*The Impacts of Bird Loss on the Forests of Guam*";

■ Dr. Roger Goodwill, D.A., Marine Biologist and Chairman, Biological Sciences Department, Brigham Young University, Hawaii. "*An Update of Current Research concerning Migratory Pacific Golden Plovers, Pluvialis fulva, and certain Marine Intertidal Organisms*";

■ Dr. Dilip Nandwani, Ph.D., Plant Pathologist, Cooperative Research, Extension, and Education Service, Northern Marianas College. "*Applying Tissue Culture Techniques to Improve CNMI Agricultural Crops and an Update on Recent Research of CNMI Specialty Crops, Including Medicinal Plants";*

■ Ms. Kimberly Vaillancourt, M.Sc., Science Instructor, Hopwood Junior High School, Saipan. "*Conducting an In-Class Debate Regarding the Proposal to Establish a National Monument in the Waters Surrounding Certain Islands of the Mariana Archipelago*"; and

■ Dr. Gary Denton, Ph.D., Environmental Toxicologist and Director, Water & Environment Research Institute, University of Guam. Co-presenters: Mr. Brian Bearden, P.E. (CNMI Division of Environmental Quality), Mr. Michael Trianni, M.Sc., (CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife) and Dr. Peter Houk, Ph.D., (CNMI Division of Environmental Quality). *"Environmental CSI Saipan: Tracking Down a Mercury Source and Delineating its Impact on Local Fisheries."*

For more information, contact John Furey at jfurey@saipan.com, or call (670) 234-5103 (seven-ring answering machine). ***(PR)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

OPA hotline numbers

This is to inform the general public that the Office of the Public Auditor's hotline telephone numbers for Rota and Tinian has been disconnected. Please call Saipan hotline number, which is toll free for inter island calls.

■ Rota hotline number: 532-0298 (disconnected)

■ Tinian hotline number: 433-3937 (disconnected)

■ Please call Saipan hotline number: 235-3937 ***(PR)***

CNMI WIC moves to new location

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program under the CNMI Department of Public Health would like to inform the public and WIC participants that effective Monday, Nov. 24, 2008, the program will be relocating its clinic to Building N-13, Upper Navy Hill (behind Brilliant Star School—follow the blue WIC signs). For any questions, call 664-4067. ***(PR)***

New office hours for child care office

Beginning Dec. 1, 2008, the Child Care Program Office will be closed for business every Friday, from 1pm to 4:30pm. This time will be used for administrative purposes, such as processing of clients' applications, re-eligibility, monitoring and other activities essential to the smooth operation of the program.

The new business hours will be:

■ Monday to Thursday 7:30am to 4:30pm

■ Friday 7:30am to 1pm

Red Cross Health & Safety Trainings

The American Red Cross announces the following health and safety training for the month December 2008:

■ Adult CPR: Dec. 2, Tuesday, 6pm -10pm

■ First Aid: Dec. 16, Tuesday, 6pm – 10pm

■ Infant & Child CPR: Dec. 20, Saturday, 8am – 1pm.

The training fee for Adult CPR and First Aid is $30 per person/per course and the training fee for the Infant & Child CPR is $35 per person. A participant's booklet is required. Participant's booklet is $5 each and is good for all three courses.

For more information, call the NMI Chapter Office at 234-3459. ***(ARC)***

Invitation to a reunion!

Join the Marriage Encounter Community at a weekend reunion on Monday, Nov. 24, 2008, starting with a 6pm Mass at the Mt. Carmel Cathedral Chapel. This will be followed by the reunion at 6:30pm at the Mt. Carmel Cathedral Social Hall (Joeten-Daidai Social Hall).

For newly encountered couples, this is your final presentation of the Weekend. For encountered couples, come meet the new couples! Refreshments are most welcome—bring any to share. ***(PR)***

MHS Class of '88 meeting

The Marianas High School Class of 1988 will have a meeting on Friday, Nov. 29, 2008, at the residence of Melvin P. and Eleanor A. Cepeda in As Lito at 6:30pm. All classmates are encouraged to attend this important meeting. If you have any questions, call Eleanor A. Cepeda at 483-6358.

CAO seeks vendors for cultural show

The Carolinian Affairs Office, in cooperation with the Refaluwasch Genealogy Society, is seeking proposals for the development and operation of a cultural show to include Carolinian culture at the Carolinian utt in Garapan. Interested tourism vendors are invited to attend a meeting on Dec. 5, 2008 at 3pm at CAO to discuss requirements. For more information, contact CAO at (670) 234-6385.

Events at Sr. Remedios School

Upcoming events at the Sister Remedios Early Childhood Development Center:

Nov. 21, 2008 Last day to turn in canned goods for food drive

Nov. 22, 2008 Rummage sale (school porch) ***(PR)***

Holiday Artists Sale reservations

Spaces are beginning to fill up for the 4th Annual Holiday Artists Sale, which will be held at the Multi-purpose Center on Nov. 29-30. Those who would like to participate may reserve space by contacting Katharyn Tuten-Puckett (tutenpuckett@yahoo.com) or Jeanne Rayphand (jeanneesq@yahoo.com). Reservation fee is $25 for one space; $15 for each additional space. ***(PR)***

Introducing
Pancake Sandwich
*175
A delightful treat of savory patty and egg in between two luscious pancakes
Pancake Sandwich only..... $1.25
Pancake Sandwich with Cheese..... $1.50
Pancake Sandwich with Egg & Cheese.... $2.00
9am to 11an daily

Thanksgiving Special
*499ers
Spaghetti with 1 pc Chickenjoy (Save $2.36)
1 pc Chickenjoy with Rice, Gravy & Pie (Save $0.76)
2 pc Chickenjoy with Rice & Gravy (Save $1.86)
Fiesta Palabok w/ 1 pc Chickenjoy (Save $2.36)

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XVIII, Issue No. 328

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Lynn A. Knight PUBLISHER
Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
Mark Rabago ASSISTANT EDITOR

MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Honoring courage in journalism

Plainclothes Ugandan police officers descended Thursday on the newsroom of the weekly newsmagazine the Independent, seizing computer documents and attempting to deliver an arrest warrant to managing editor Andrew Mwenda. "Unluckily, I was out of Uganda," Mwenda told us. Unluckily? "Yes. I do not want them to think I am running away."

No one is likely to entertain that confusion. Mwenda, who is in the United States to receive an International Press Freedom award from the Committee to Protect Journalists, founded the Independent when government pressure constrained his freedom as political editor of Uganda's largest daily newspaper. In his new post, Mwenda said, he has reported on paramilitary groups that detain civilians, take them to illegal detention centers and torture them. He has criticized President Yoweri Museveni, who was once hailed as a reformer and a departure from Africa's sad tradition of autocratic rule.

Mwenda was asked what happened. "Let's assume Obama is still president in 2030—you think he would be the same guy?" he replied. "Being in power for such a long time is not good for psychological health." Twenty-one criminal charges are pending against Mwenda, who could be sentenced to 105 years. He says that he is not worried; every time the government moves against him, he laughs, circulation rises and the Independent's credibility is enhanced.

Mwenda's courage is typical of CPJ award winners. Others being honored this year include photographer Bilal Hussein of the Associated Press, whom the U.S. military imprisoned in Iraq for two years without charges; Danish Karokhel and Farida Nekzad, who run a news agency in Afghanistan, one of the world's most dangerous places for reporters, and especially for female reporters such as Nekzad; Beatrice Mtetwa, a lawyer who has defended journalists against the vicious persecution of President Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe; and Cuban journalist Hector Maseda Gutierrez.

Maseda Gutierrez will not attend the award banquet in New York on Tuesday because he is in prison in Cuba, as he has been for the past five years. "At a time of such change in the world and in the U.S., the government of Cuba after 50 years hasn't changed one bit," said his friend Manuel V zquez Portal, a journalist who was imprisoned and then exiled from Cuba. Raul and Fidel Castro have 21 journalists in jail, of whom Maseda Gutierrez, 65 years old and serving a 20-year sentence, is the oldest. The Cuban government "will not tolerate any freedom of expression," his colleague explains.

Those of us who can take such freedom for granted should salute these honorees and their many colleagues who risk life and liberty every day to do their jobs.

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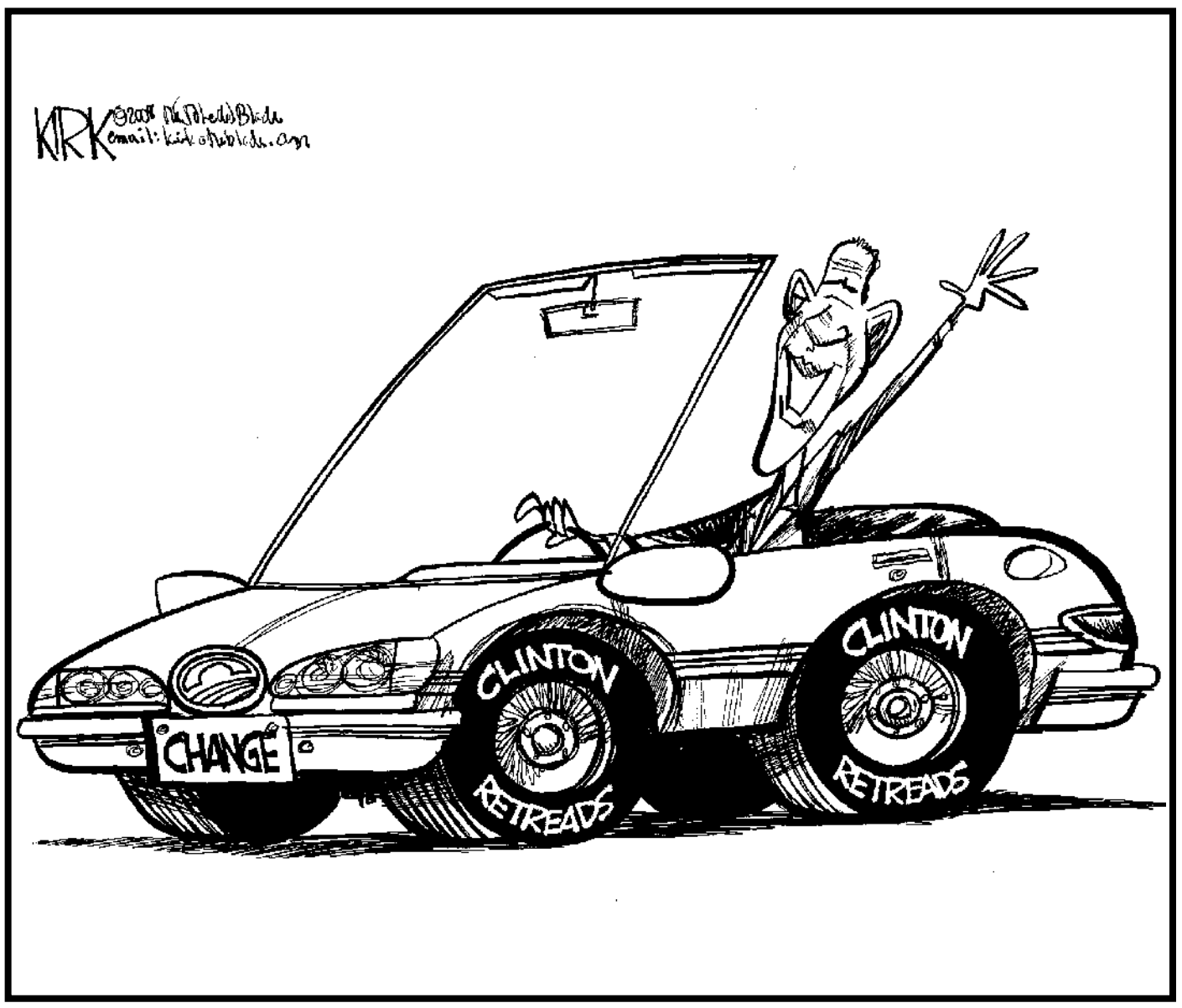


There's no way to clean up this act

By JOEL STEIN
Special to the Los Angeles Times

Stein is a columnist for the Times*. E-mail Stein at jstein@latimescolumnists.com.*

I was discovered on the fly machine at Gold's Gym. "Will & Grace" co-creator Max Mutchnick approached me mid-set, my pecs, no doubt, rippling. He told me about his new sitcom pilot for ABC-TV, and I figured he was bragging due to insecurity over my pecs. I acted very interested, in case he wanted to hire me to write for it. Or to lift it up and down 12 times.

Instead, he asked me to audition for the lead role. At which point I informed him that, although I could see why my pecs led him to assume otherwise, I'm not an actor. He countered that he sees me on television all the time. At which point I had to tell him that parsing the semiotics of the 101 sexiest celebrity bodies on E! would not qualify as acting even under the broad definitions set forth by James Lipton.

Nevertheless, Max insisted I come in, and even though I was well aware that I cannot act, I agreed. As soon as he sent me the script, I started figuring out how to deal with my upcoming money and fame. Within minutes, I pictured myself usurping Max's authority and threatening to leave the show unless they made the writing darker and artsier. This was despite the fact that the script was much better than anything I've ever written, none of which is at all dark and artsy. Also, I oddly fixated on bringing back the "Battle of the Network Stars" so I could do the obstacle course. I am not a very good fantasizer.

By the time my agent, Richard Weitz—who handles only writing and not acting—got the call from Max, I had convinced myself that I should star in a network show. If every rapper could do it, so could I. Richard, however, did not feel the same way. He used phrases like "make a fool of yourself," "look stupid in front of executives you'll have to pitch your own shows to" and "you're not doing this." I used phrases like "fun" and "life experience" and "you're typing e-mails and not listening to me anymore, aren't you?"

The night before my audition, I drove over to my actor friend Andrew Leeds' house so he could teach me how to pretend to be another person. In four hours of considering my character's motivations and reactions and even what he was thinking about before the scene, I learned more about script writing than any four hours I'd spent at a keyboard. Andrew learned that being my friend was a huge mistake.

When I showed up for the audition, I signed in and sat quietly in the hall pretending to review my script but actually using it as a screen as I secretly flexed and unflexed my chest. Despite everything I had ever seen in movies, the other guys up for the part were friendly. When I told Matthew Lillard that I hadn't acted since high school, he not only gave me advice but—when he finished his audition and left—came running back up the stairs to wish me luck.

Max, his writing partner, David Kohan, and the casting director were equally nice, spending five minutes chatting about mutual friends, which calmed me down but also might have reduced the blood flow to my chest that I'd been working so hard on.

You know when you meet some people at a party and start to tell a story, and realize about four words in that those people are totally not interested in anything you're saying? Me neither, but I imagine it's just like my audition.

The part wound up going to Josh Cooke, who had the advantage of being an actor. And ABC didn't wind up putting it on the air anyway. But I still needed to find out how I did, so I called Max. "You're too cerebral," he said. "You thought about what you were doing. Actors are dumb for a reason. They don't think, they just be. It's like when you make love. You just have to do it." It's as if Max has been secretly talking to my wife.

He said he made me audition because I had the right look for the part, which he said was 75 percent of the requirement. "Eric McCormack was hired because of his hair. He got that job because of his haircut."

Max accurately guessed that I didn't play an instrument because my rhythm was so bad; good actors, he said, usually play piano or drums. But he said I wasn't the absolute worst person who auditioned for the part. "You have business managers who say, `Please read my second cousin.' But you were definitely in the bottom 10 percent."

Despite the fact that most of my agent's warnings came true, as always, I'm glad I did it. I not only learned about writing and how to run an audition, I gained an appreciation for acting. In the preparation, it requires a whole lot of thinking. And then, when you perform, you need to stop thinking. All while keeping your hair perfect.

I still don't know why every rapper can do it.

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, Century Insurance Building, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

45 years: A long time to hide idealism

By SUSANNA RODELL
Special to The Hartford Courant

Rodell is a journalist and a former member of the Courant's editorial board.

Forty-five years ago on Nov. 22, my heart broke.

I was 15, and the assassination of John F. Kennedy shattered my world. All that optimism and all that idealism that the young president had harnessed were suddenly left with nowhere to go.

Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson picked up the reins, but that didn't help my teenage grief. The ensuing years didn't help, either: Vietnam. Martin Luther King. Bobby Kennedy. Watergate. The brief respite of the Carter administration, spoiled by the first gas crunch and the Iran hostage crisis. Eight years of Reaganism and the triumph of government-as-enemy ideology.

For a brief three years, from 1960 to 1963, I felt pretty good being American. I planned to join the Peace Corps. I loved my president. The world seemed wide open.

Obviously, some of my sunny world view was youthful naivete; in later years I was able to see JFK for the flawed leader he was. But that reflection didn't—and doesn't—cancel out those three years in which America felt good about itself and reached out to the world, briefly harnessing the hearts of a generation.

I'd almost forgotten how that time felt, until November. My four children reminded me. Three of them volunteered for Barack Obama, two of them in North Carolina. The photos on Facebook show them partying Election Night in the streets of Greensboro with excited young people of different colors, hugging each other, giving high-fives, dancing in the rain.

My eldest daughter spoke of her 5-year-old son, saying how great a gift it was that he would come of age with this man's face in his mind as the first connection with the word "president."

I felt my heart beginning to thaw. And speaking to others my age in the ensuing short weeks, I hear similar sentiments.

We are the heartbroken generation. Ever since that day 45 years ago, we have been schooled by tragedy and disappointment: violence depriving us of inspired leaders, feckless ones leading us into disaster and cynicism.

Even Bill Clinton, our first boomer president, let his demons rule him. I'd seen the same dynamics at work through the years in so many of us: ideals eroded by ego and libido. Starting somewhere in the late 1970s, I came into the habit of repeating to myself what I never said aloud: "We've failed."

What happened to the late 1960s energy that propelled us into the streets to fight against a disastrous war, that had us briefly socializing with people of all races and backgrounds and not caring where our friends came from? What happened to the instinct for service over self?

We had been arrogant. No question. We knew we were right—about war, about the environment, about racism, about the dangers of unfettered markets, about the inequities of our health-care system, about so many things. The country, it seemed, wasn't listening. Part of that arrogance, though, was our need for speed. We expected our vast, complicated country to turn around fast, and when it didn't, we felt defeated. Understandable, since human lives and generations are so short.

Retreat. With no place to harness the idealism, it splintered in two. In one direction lay individual salvation: back to graduate school, job, kids, the consolations of consumerism. In the other, just plain silliness, the die-hards of one stripe or another backing into their niches. A lot of us shoved our idealism into the back of our hearts, put away in a drawer like grandmother's pearls, hoping one day for an appropriate occasion.

We had been arrogant. No question. We knew we were right—about war, about the environment, about racism, about the dangers of unfettered markets, about the inequities of our health-care system, about so many things. The country, it seemed, wasn't listening.

Part of that arrogance, though, was our need for speed. We expected our vast, complicated country to turn around fast, and when it didn't, we felt defeated. Understandable, since human lives and generations are so short.

Maybe it just took longer than we planned. Maybe those assassinations and descents into our uglier nature were just temporary setbacks.

Is it going to be OK again to look after each other? To project something other than arrogance onto the world? To have thoughtful leaders who talk to other leaders? Can we share rather than hoard?

Can we be led by a man who embodies not just the diversity of America, but of the world? Can we put this 45-year-old nightmare behind us?

My kids tell me: Yes, we can.

Don't get trapped in the spending spiral

By JUDITH LEVINE
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

We'll have to curb the urge to splurge, but we can afford a break.

`Tis the season to be frugal. Two-thirds of American consumers tell pollsters they're cutting way back on their holiday spending. Nearly six in 10 Americans told Pew Research in October that their finances are fair or poor. Jobs are disappearing, personal bankruptcies are proliferating, and if you think your gigantic credit card balance is a problem, wait till you see the next crisis: no new credit at all!

It all gives new meaning to the term Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving, when hyperactive shopping is supposed to bump retailers' bottom line into the positive column. And if next Friday is the bummer forecasters are predicting, it will be just another glum day in a long procession of economically and emotionally black Fridays—and Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays—to come. Recessions are tough every day. But they feel toughest on holidays, when generosity and overindulgence are the words of the hour.

Adversity will not make us nicer, more spiritual beings. We won't join hands around the globe and sing "O Come All Ye Faithful" as we watch the Dow plummet. In fact, people are more likely to fight, drink to excess or mug their neighbors when money is tight.

Instead, scarcity depresses us, especially when we don't have that easy (if temporary) pick-me-up of buying a little something. When I read that half of Pew's respondents agreed that "People should learn to live with less," I could hear their voices: righteous or resigned.

Relax. People can learn to live with less—happily. I know from experience. A few years ago my partner, Paul, and I spent a whole year not shopping. We bought nothing but necessities: basic groceries, Internet access, insulin for our diabetic cat. We forwent the rest: clothes, books, CDs, movies, restaurant meals.

The good news is, a little moderation can bring a lot of cheer.

The Year Without Shopping occurred to me at Christmastime. Although I'm a secular Jew, I'd scattered $1,001 on gifts and other holiday odds and ends. As my credit line grew smaller and my shopping bags heavier, I envisioned their contents, along with those of a whole nation, disliked and discarded—and moldering in landfills forever. Then as now, more than two-thirds of the gross domestic product came from consumer spending. There was, and still is, essentially one measure of economic health: growth. But all that growth is outgrowing our finite planet. Ask any economist left or right about this, and he'll write off resource depletion as an "externality," something to worry about later.

I decided to investigate the connection between the personal activity of shopping and the global problem of overconsumption. I figured that the best way to understand the draw of the marketplace would be to quit it altogether, then see how that felt. I knew that my no-shopping budget would be on Mother Earth's side. Which side would the macroeconomy eventually be on? Today it's clearer than ever that we'll have to worry about that sooner rather than later.

Paul, a non-shopper, was game. I got a book contract, and the rest is ... more complicated than anticipated.

Almost immediately, we learned that both necessity and desire are defined by where, when and among whom we live. A Vietnamese farmer needs a quart of fuel per month to feed his family; a Cleveland commuter may burn 20 gallons of gas in the same time.

The distinction is also personal. If I was going to pay for haircuts, what about hair gel? Toilet paper yes, but Kleenex? We deemed organic coffee a must-have but disagreed on wine. "I'm Italian," he pleaded. "Wine is like milk to me." I raised an eyebrow. He upped the argument: "It's like water!"

People buy to keep up with the Joneses, although it's not just the Joneses anymore. The media's 24/7 surveillance of the absurdly wealthy entices us to keep up with the Zeta-Joneses and the Gateses, in what economist Robert Frank calls "luxury fever." The delusion that we can all live like Croesus is partly to blame for the mess we're in today.

Still, shopping is not something "they" make us do. It provides undeniable pleasure.

During our cold-turkey year, I was sometimes bored. British psychotherapist Adam Phillips calls boredom the restless state of waiting to desire. Consumption gives us myriad names for inchoate desire—and ready objects to allay it. Take away shopping, and you're left with the restlessness.

When we couldn't go out for a beer or a meal with friends, Paul and I felt lonely. When others talked about the latest movies, we sat dumb. I felt out of it. In a consumer society, much of our social, cultural and political lives—even our identities—are cobbled together from the things and experiences we purchase.

We walked to free concerts and the Brooklyn Public Library, and visited museums on free nights. We trawled the public sphere with gratitude—but also with dismay, because the public sphere is in sorry shape.

There are only so many dollars, and they can either go to private consumption—President Bush's concept of an "ownership society"—or be invested, through taxes, in the public good. The latter can't just be entered as a personal-finance debit. We should see it as an asset, in the form of highways or health clinics, yes, but also in the feeling that we're in this together, a.k.a. community.

Not shopping, we devoted more time to activism and more money to causes. I paid off an $8,000 credit card debt without really trying and haven't run it up again. I still shop less than I did. And on more or less the same income, I give away much more money than I used to.

The hiatus reminded me how sweet it is to take home the perfect pair of trousers or sit in a cafe watching the world. Unless you're a monk, material abstinence does not magnify the spirit. Still, compared either to consumption or abstention, the best soul-grower is social connection.

Which brings me back to the holidays.

By December of our non-shopping year, we knew we could walk away from the seasonal extras—red-velvet ribbon, champagne flutes, figgy pudding (whatever that is). But what about gifts? What about parties? Were we going to impose our skinflintery on our loved ones? Did we have to beg off fireside get-togethers just to avoid bringing a box of chocolates?

We relish lighting up the dark days with giving. But how could we give without getting and spending? How could we celebrate without adding to the global litter?

I got a clue from the past. The midwinter holidays originate in pagan rites to seduce the sun back from the underworld. Doing that requires excess—gorging, reveling and giving.

In this spirit, Paul and I throw an annual Hanukkah Latke Bash, the no-shopping year not excepted. We load the table with potato pancakes, vats of sour cream and homemade applesauce, and plates of smoked fish. Our guests arrive with libations and load their plates. Our feast is cheap—basically the food of the shtetl. And all that's left in the end is (compostable) bones.

"You never know what is enough unless you know what is more than enough," wrote Blake. Now think celebration, not shopping. Because in spite—no, because—of the economic gloom, it is our duty, and can be our pleasure, to make the season as festive today as in the fattest times.

Levine is the author of "Not Buying It: My Year Without Shopping."

The Weather

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼77°	▲84° ▼77°	▲86° ▼75°	▲85° ▼76°	▲85° ▼76°

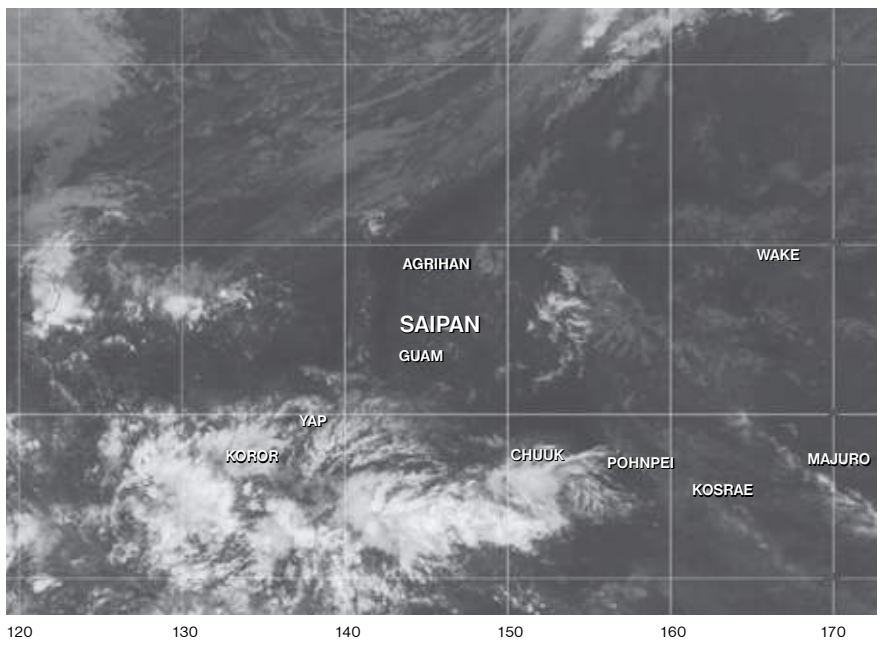
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Intermittent Clouds	▲90	▼77
Palau	Cloudy	▲86	▼74
Yap	Cloudy	▲86	▼74
Chuuk	Cloudy	▲89	▼79
Pohnpei	Mostly Cloudy	▲92	▼72
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	▲87	▼81
Majuro	Partly Sunny	▲88	▼75

Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Sunny	▲70	▼55
Beijing	Partly Sunny	▲52	▼28
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	▲76	▼67
Honolulu	Mostly Cloudy	▲81	▼73
London	Partly Cloudy	▲51	▼36
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	▲82	▼54
Manila	Mostly Cloudy	▲91	▼77
Melbourne	Mostly Cloudy	▲68	▼44
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲78	▼59
New York	Partly Cloudy	▲40	▼27
Osaka	Intermittent Clouds	▲56	▼40
Paris	Partly Cloudy	▲53	▼33
Pusan	Mostly	▲57	▼32
Rome	Rain	▲60	▼51
Salem	Cloudy	▲52	▼40
San Francisco	Clear	▲65	▼43
Seoul	Cloudy	▲48	▼25
Tokyo	Partly Sunny	▲60	▼42
Washington, DC	Clear	▲41	▼25

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, SATURDAY, NOV. 22, 2008
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A shear line extends southwestward from 25N148E to beyond 130E at 16N. Patchy cloud cover and scattered showers extend up to 320 miles in patchy areas northwest of the shearline. A few thunderstorms are occurring from 16N to 17N between 130E and 133E. Convergence near a surface trough extending north-northeastward from 1N137E to 6N139E to 9N139E is triggering scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms over Koror and south of Yap between 2N and 8N from 133E to 147E. A weakening surface trough and trade-wind convergence are producing scattered showers between 3N and 8N from 151E to 160E. This area includes Chuuk and Pohnpei states.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

04:47AM Today	High Tide:	1.4 Feet
10:15AM Today	Low Tide:	0.8 Feet
04:24PM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
11:31PM Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Sunday	6:23AM	5:44 PM
Monday	6:23AM	5:44 PM
Tuesday	6:24AM	5:44 PM
Wednesday	6:24AM	5:44 PM
Thursday	6:25AM	5:44 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Sunday	2:25AM	2:30PM
Monday	3:14AM	3:07PM
Tuesday	4:04AM	3:46PM
Wednesday	4:55AM	4:27PM
Thursday	5:47AM	5:12 PM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 19, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota

CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm	1,7

Saipan-Guam

CO9317	5:00am	5:50am	Daily
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm	1,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	2,3,4,5,6
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily

Saipan-Narita

NW 099	5:00am	7:40am	Daily
NW 078	8:25am	1:30pm	2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 075	4:55pm	7:30pm	Daily

Saipan-Osaka

NW 083	4:30pm	7:20pm	Daily

Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078	8:25am	11:05am	Daily

Saipan-Incheon

OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:20pm	7:00pm	Daily

Saipan-Busan

OZ 608	3:50am	7:20am	1,4,5,7

Saipan-Shanghai

FM 844	2:50am	5:40am	2,6

Rota-Guam

CO 9597	12:50pm	1:20pm	1,7

Guam-Manila

CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	3,5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:50am	1,2,4,6,7

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan

CO 9598	3:25am	4:00am	5,6

Guam-Saipan

CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	1,2,3,4,7
CO9598	2:30am	4:00am	5,6 via Rota
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9600	10:20am	11:10am	Daily
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

Narita-Saipan

NW 076	10:15am	2:40pm	Daily
NW 077	6:25pm	1:25am+1	2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 100	8:45pm	1:15am+1	Daily

Osaka-Saipan

NW 084	10:40am	3:10pm	Daily

Nagoya-Saipan

NW 077	9:00pm	1:25am+1	Daily

Incheon-Saipan

OZ 605	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6

Busan-Saipan

OZ 607	9:30pm	2:40am+1	3,4,6,7

Shanghai-Saipan

FM 843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1,5

Guam-Rota

CO 9598	2:30am	3:00am	5,6

Manila-Guam

CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	3,5 via Koror
CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:10pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

Schedule of Religious Services

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral
Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm

Korean Center
Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am
Monday- Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm
Saturday: 6am and 6pm

Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish
Wednesday Mass: 6pm
First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm
Saturday Mass: 6pm
Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am

Saint Jude Parish
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm

San Antonio Parish
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Tuesday and Friday: 6pm

San Francisco de Borja-Rota
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6pm

San Isidro-Rota
Sunday: 5am and 10am
Monday-Wednesday: 7pm
Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish
Sunday: 6am and 7:30am
Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm

San Roque Parish
Sunday: 9am
Wednesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10:30am

San Vicente Parish
Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6pm

Santa Remedios
Sunday: 7:30am
Tuesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10am-Baptism

Santa Soledad
Sunday: 7:30am

PROTESTANT

Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan
Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm
Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan
Worship/Study Opportunities
Adult Sunday School: 9am
Youth Sunday School: 9am
English Worship Service Sunday: 10am
Sunday Service: 5:30pm
Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm
Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm
Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm;
Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm
Mid-week Service: 7:30pm
Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm
Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm
Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau,
Call 235-0545 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan
Worship Service: 9am
GBI Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am
Sunday: 7am
Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm
Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan
Wednesday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (English)
Saturday: 5:30am (Tagalog); 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church Koblerville
Sunday Services
9:00 AM
Place of the church-next to Mt. Carmel Cathedral on Chalan Kanoa Dr. • Tel: 322-6158
Pastor JJ Matsumoto

Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 6:30pm, home group
8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan
English Service: 9-11am, Sunday
Tagalog Service: 6-8pm, Sunday

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 8:20am
Sunday Adult: 10am
Sunday Adult: 11:30am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 10am–12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan
English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting:
English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry
Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church
Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided)
Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620

Saipan Bible Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30-10am
Divine Worship: 10am-11:30am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Saipan Christian Church
Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm
Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 6pm
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 7pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30pm

Saipan Community Church
(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan
(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10-10:40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church
(Formerly Saipan Baptist Church)
Afetna St., San Antonio

Sunday		
	9am	Sunday school
	10am	Regular worship
	6pm	worship
Wednesday		
	7pm	worship

Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. For further information, please call Pastor David M. Mclure at 234-1939/235-7779.

Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi
Service Times
Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

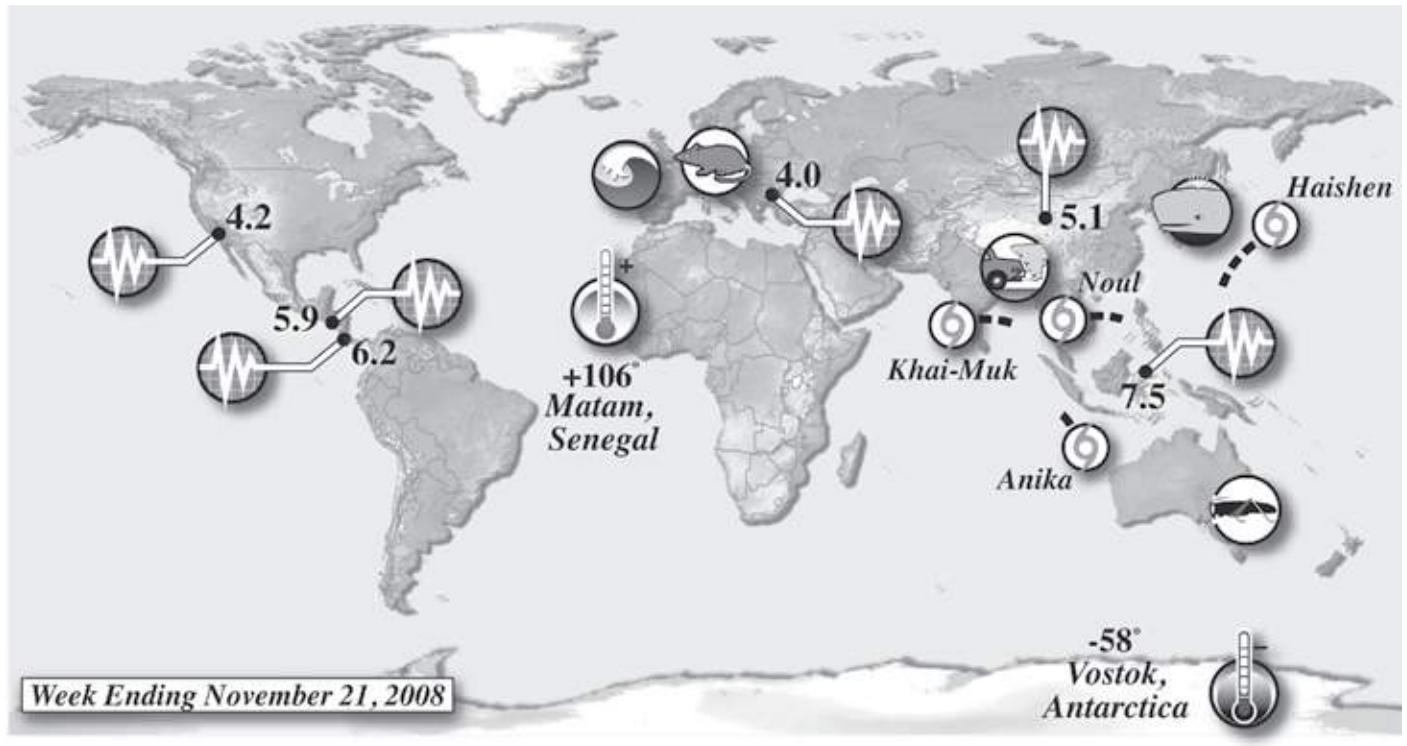
Upper Room International Ministries

Sunday	5:30am-6:30am	
Morning prayer		
	7am-9am	English service
	7am-9am	Sunday school
	10am-12noon	English service, Koblerville
Wednesday	7pm-9pm	Prayer meeting
Saturday	7pm-9pm	Tagalog service

Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship:10:30am
Sunday PM Worship:7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

Earthweek: A Diary of the Planet



Melting Lifts Tides

Melting water from ice caps in Antarctica and Greenland, and that from mountain glaciers worldwide, has replaced warmer temperatures as the main force behind rising sea levels, according to a new study. Using two types of satellite observations, Anny Cazenave of Franceís National Centers for Space Studies found that thermal expansion of the seas virtually stopped after 2003 due to a respite in ocean warming. Satellite-based gravity measurements of the Earth revealed that the Greenland ice sheet is losing about 150 gigatons of ice each year. Combined with the loss of ice in West Antarctica, observations show that melting has contributed about 1 millimeter (.04 inches) per year to the rising seas over the past five years. Ocean levels have been rising since 1993 by almost double the rate they did during the previous 50 years. The trend could have disastrous impacts on millions of people who live in low-lying coastal areas.

Brown Cloud Hazards

Vast clouds of air pollution are darkening the skies in many parts of Asia, melting glaciers and posing a threat to the health of millions in the region, according to a new United Nations report. The ìatmospheric brown cloudsî (ABC) result from the burning of fossil fuels, wood and plants. They have been found to amplify the impact of climate change brought on by greenhouse gas emissions, the U.N. Environment Program report said. The 10,000-foot-thick layer of soot and industrial pollution has been observed stretching from the Arabian Peninsula to China and the islands of the western Pacific. The ABC make the skies in at least 13 major Asian cities up to 25 percent dimmer and contribute to public health hazards, the report says. Some researchers involved in the study said they were concerned the diminished sunlight could threaten agricultural production for 3 billion people in the region.

Japanís Whale Hunt

The largest ship in Japanís whaling fleet embarked on another season of ìresearchî whaling as the Australian government announced that new scientific techniques make it unnecessary to kill the whales in order to study them. Japan is able to circumvent a ban on commercial whaling in place since 1986 by saying its operations are needed to study the marine mammalsí migratory and reproductive habits. But Australian Environment Minister Peter Garrett says his countryís new $4 million whale research program makes slaughtering whales completely unnecessary. ìModern-day research uses genetic and molecular techniques as well as satellite tags, acoustic methods and aerial surveys rather than grenade-tipped harpoons,î Garrett said. Japanís fleet plans to kill 935 minke whales and 50 fin whales during its Antarctic hunt.

Australian Swarms

Fresh swarms of maturing locusts swept across parts of Australiaís New South Wales state as many farmers were preparing for harvest. About a dozen swarms, one nearly 4 miles long and more than 500 feet wide, were spotted in the south and west of the state. The government has placed nine planes on stand-by to spray the insects if the swarms grow larger or thicker. Agriculture officials say it is fortunate many of the crops had turned yellow before the locusts arrived as the ravenous insects prefer to feed on green plants.

Earthquakes

A powerful undersea earthquake killed at least six people on the Indonesian island of Sulawesi. More than 1,000 homes were damaged, 400 leveled to the ground.

■ A 6.2 magnitude quake damaged a few homes along the Panama-Costa Rica border.

■ Earth movements were also felt in western China, Bulgaria, El Salvador and near San Diego, Calif.

Tropical Cyclones

Four people were killed when Tropical Storm Noul triggered flash flooding in Vietnam.

■ Cyclone Khai-Muk drenched southern parts of India.

■ Tropical Storm Haishen churned the western Pacific while Cyclone Anika spun to the south of Java.

Pied Piper Redux

The German city made famous by the fabled Pied Piper is being overrun once again by a modern-day rat infestation ó this time with no one to pipe the pests out of town. An abandoned public garden in Hamelin has become a haven for exploding numbers of mice and rats, which are finding an overabundance of food in a nearby garbage dump. All this as the community prepares for the 725th anniversary of the end of its most famous rat plague. But unlike in June of 1284, there is no piper to lure the rats to a drowning death in the nearby Weser River. That event was the basis of the Brothers Grimm fairy tale in which the townsfolk refused to pay the piper for his services. In retaliation, he piped off with Hamelinís children, who were never seen again.

Distributed by: Universal Press Syndicate
www.earthweek.com
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OFFBEAT BRIEFS

Alabama man stabbed in fuss over cheap beer

MOULTON, Ala. (AP)—A dispute over cheap beer left one man in the hospital with stab wounds and another man charged with assault, authorities said Friday. Grady "Skip" Wilburn Dollar, 64, was accused of stabbing Mickey Joe Hill, 37, during a dispute early Thursday, said Sgt. Mark Richard of the Lawrence County Sheriff's Department. Richard said the two men had been drinking together when Dollar gave Hill $10 and told him to go to the store for more. Richard said Hill brought back only four cans of Natural Light, a low-cost brand, and Dollar got mad that he didn't get more for his money. "He said, 'For $10 you could have gotten a half case,'" said Richard. "Four cans of Natural Light only cost $3 or $4." The victim then asked for one of the four beers and pushed the older man when he refused to hand one over, the investigator said. "Then the suspect went to the kitchen, got a big butcher knife and came back and stabbed him," Richard said. Hill remained hospitalized with a wound to the lower abdomen but was expected to recover fully since the blade missed all major organs. Dollar was free on $5,000 bond. Richard said records did not reflect that he had hired an attorney, and there was no telephone listing in Dollar's name.

New constable allows friend to fire gun into air

SAN BENITO, Texas (AP)—A newly elected constable was questioned by sheriff's deputies after allowing a friend to fire his county—issued handgun into the air at a party. The constable, elected earlier this month, was at a friend's house late Saturday when Cameron County Sheriff's deputies responded to a call of shots fired. The constable and the homeowner appeared to be drunk and the friend admitted to firing the gun, according to the incident report. Neither man was charge.

Good Housekeeping

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Trey Russell uses his stylish apartment as an extension of his nearby boutique - it's a place to display accessories in a home setting.

Small living space, **grand ideas**

By BARBARA THORNBURG
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

For Trey Russell, "less is more" is not just a modernist creed but a way of life. In his boutique, Aris, and his second-story garden apartment behind the shop, there is a pared-down yet luxurious aesthetic on display.

Art books in both home and store sit in low, color-coordinated stacks. A row of dark wood boxes in graduated sizes—think Russian nesting dolls—hide the clutter of DVDs, playing cards and remote controls. Objets d'art are deftly juxtaposed: a Nymphenburg porcelain rhinoceros and a grouping of black jacketless books; an Anne Ricketts sculpture of a bronze hand and a slender hourglass. One floral arrangement consists simply of a pale-yellow dahlia floating in a Chinese bowl.

"Whether you're displaying merchandise in a store or objects in your home, it's important to give each object breathing room," Russell says. "I treat each accessory as a piece of art; in a small space, you want everything to be important."

For the engaging Russell, merchandising his gift store—a melange of home furnishings, high-end fashion, consignment clothing, jewelry, teas, chocolates and fresh seasonal flowers—is like putting together a big puzzle. "Every day I get deliveries of new merchandise," he says. "I have to make it all fit in a small space and make it look attractive." Which is precisely the challenge so many people face in their homes, particularly as they prepare for the onslaught of holiday parties and houseguests.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Trey Russell's apartment is just as well-edited as his shop: a dark dining room table contrasts with soothing lilac-gray walls.

Russell uses his 1,100-square-foot apartment overlooking the rooftops of north Laguna Beach as an extension of the store. It's as minimalist and restrained as a Beverly Hills boutique. Lilac-gray and violet-slate walls create a perfect foil for his collection of well-edited furnishings, upholstered in a subtle palette of soothing alabaster, beige, gray and chocolate. Like his store, a stylish mix of affordable goods—Pottery Barn shelves, West Elm bookcases and Crate & Barrel chairs—keep company with Christian Liaigre consoles, stingray tables from France and $3,000 Caleb Siemon art vases.

"Style is not about money, but about the mix. I want customers to be able to see the things I sell in my store in a home-like setting. There's no reason a one-bedroom apartment can't be just as stylish as a 5,000-square-foot home," says Russell, who can be seen most days dressed in smart yet casual attire—white Gap jeans, a Polo tee and a jaunty, custom-made linen hat.

Russell keeps his clothes in a well-disciplined

See SMALL on next page

Edde, the store mascot, greets a new customer at Aris. The shop is a mix of home furnishings, high-end fashion, consignment clothing, jewelry, teas, chocolates and fresh seasonal flowers.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

12 steps to a sleeker style

(c) 2008, Los Angeles Times

Holiday guests headed your way? Here are a dozen of Trey Russell's strategies for imparting a pared-down, decidedly unfussy sense of sophistication:

1 Mini-gallery: To showcase his collection of black-and-white photographs in the apartment's hallway, Russell not only added four 3-foot-long picture rails from Pottery Barn but also stood photographs on the floor, leaned against the wall. "It's like a mini-gallery," he says. "I can move pictures around easily without wrecking the walls."

2 Art books, sans jackets: To create a focal point for the living room, Russell placed three bays of espresso-hued West Elm bookcases together to appear as one large piece. He decorated the shelves with low stacks of color-coordinated art and lifestyle books—without jackets—and a few beautiful objects. "Book jackets just get torn anyway; you might as well get rid of them," he says. "It creates a more monochromatic, less chaotic look."

3 Less is more: "First rule: You have to establish what's important to you," Russell says. "Adorn your home with items you cherish rather than gifts from someone that you don't really like. As far as closets go, arrange your clothes seasonally: Hang by color and stack like-things together for easy access. Pack away clothes and other items you don't use. It will make your life so much simpler."

4 Quality paint color: "Paint is one of the cheapest ways to change the look of your apartment or home—and one of the hardest things to get right. Go for the highest quality paint—Donald Kaufman or Farrow & Ball. They create complex pigments the light will play off of all day long. Pros recommend that you add 50 percent white to create a tint of your wall color for the ceiling. It will make the room feel bigger and keep you from feeling claustrophobic."

5 Closet drapes instead of doors: "If you have a small room, consider taking out the closet's doors and replacing them with a handsome drapery on rings that slide along a track. I used a light-gray Belgian linen, and the drapery panels made the room look so much softer. It also gave me more room. Let friends think you have a drop-dead ocean view behind them. Nobody will know it's a closet unless you tell them."

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Streamlining spaces but not sacrificing style, Trey Russell recommends, from top: minimalist displays, surrounding yourself with favored things, curtaining off closets and storing small things (but not pug Edde) in graduated boxes.

6 Repurposing: "When it comes to utilitarian objects, think creatively about how to use them in another way. I recently bought a pair of small glass decanters for holding balsamic vinegar and olive oil for the shop. At home, I fill them with Jo Malone body oil."

7 Simple floral art: "I like to cut stems off flowers and just float the heads. Dahlias are particularly spectacular that way. I don't particularly like long stems, except in French tulips. Succulents in concrete and ceramic planters are also a favorite. They require the lowest maintenance of any flower, and if you forget to water them for two weeks, they are still alive and beautiful. They thrive on neglect."

8 In the box: "When you are living in a small space, you have to come up with creative ways to store things in an attractive way. I like to hide my clutter in a series of different-sized wood boxes. They're great for holding my DVDs, playing cards, remote controls—anything small."

9 The great coverup: "I often select a chair shape I like from a moderately priced store, then reupholster it in a better fabric. The two chairs in the living room are from Crate & Barrel. I reupholstered them in a luxurious chocolate mohair. The end result: I get what I want, and in most cases, it's a faster route to immediate gratification."

10 Mirror, mirror on the wall: "It's an old designer's trick, but I use mirrors to make my store and apartment look bigger. I have a pair of custom-made, alder, 9 1/2-foot-tall mirrors leaning against walls in my store. I have a square mirror over a console by the door in my apartment that reflects the ocean."

11 Tea for two: "I always keep a tray set up for tea in both my apartment and gift shop. I set out a small teapot and a couple cups and saucers, La Perruche sugar cubes and some Donseumor lemon cookies. Then all I have to do is to bring the water to a boil and steep the tea. The tea tray is a simple gesture that says, `Welcome.'"

12 Coordinated canine: Russell jokes that his Chinese pug, Edde, fits his subtle, earthy color scheme with his creamy-blond coat and black mask. "It wasn't done on purpose—to select a dog that goes with my shop and home—but it doesn't hurt to have a pet that matches your decor. He's a showstopper, for sure." ***(Barbara Thornburg)***

The garden hose: Fountain of fun or snake in the grass?

Like a lot of fun things from childhoods gone by, the garden hose—an ever-ready drinking fountain, a reliable stand-in for a trip to the pool—has become a target of the safety scolds. Jessica Theis, 5, was among children playing with a hose on a hot summer day in Takoma Park, Md.

THE WASHINGTON POST

By STEVE HENDRIX
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—It was the original flavored water, although you're not likely to see it bottled and sold. "Eau de Garden Hose" lacks a certain marketing allure.

But could anything taste more like summer than a long, gulping draft from the sparkling arc that gushes from a sun-warmed hose?

The first one in from the ballfield—or the trampoline, or the fierce round of backyard tag—gets the first overheated spurt as other sweaty arrivals line up jostling behind. Everyone knows the drill: Let it run until it's cool, then gulp freely and messily, directing as much down your neck as into your mouth. Drinking from the hose is a chance to wear your refreshment as much as drink it.

The hose is the plumbing of a summer day, an ever-ready drinking fountain, a reliable stand-in for a trip to the pool, a maddening, tangly indispensable fixture of a thirsty garden. Of course, like a lot of fun things from childhoods gone by (bare-headed bike riding, firecrackers, anything worth doing off a diving board), the hose has become a target of the safety scolds.

Not that a scorching summer day is the easiest time to follow all the new rules.

"I like spraying my sister," said Nicholas Ward, 5, who with his twin sister, Caroline, is a serious practitioner of backyard hose play at their home in suburban Takoma Park, Md.

"They spray each other, they spray me, they spray anyone who comes in range," said their mother, Beth Hedstrom. "For the kids, it probably has all the appeal of getting to pretend to shoot someone, but in a form a little more palatable to moms."

Add a sprinkler, and the humble hose is upgraded to a tiny backyard water park, a little personal rain shower for kids to dance with in the summer sun. Any lawn sprinkler will do, but the toy industry has long viewed the hose as a promising sales point: There are slippery slides and spouting water snakes and watery volleyball nets. There is Mt. Tiki-Soki, a Polynesian idol that squats on the grass building pressure until water explodes in all directions.

THE WASHINGTON POST

Caroline Ward, 5, plays in her Nemo sprinkler at home in Takoma Park, Md. For Caroline, the hose is a plaything and a drinking fountain—which health groups say could pose risks.

The Ward twins have a Nemo sprinkler and a *very* cool device that shoots water eight feet into the air with a plastic rocket balanced precariously at the top of the plume.

"Sometimes it hovers, and sometimes it just falls down," Caroline said. "But I like jumping through it."

The backyard waterworks is so satisfying that the twins have a hard time choosing between hose play and pool play. "I wish I could do both at the same time," said Nicholas, imagining his own summertime nirvana: a swimming pool equipped with a garden hose.

And when he's thirsty? His toy becomes his drinking cup.

"It tastes a little bit like grass," Nicholas said of his drinks from the hose.

Hose water is venerable and refreshing. But is it safe? Hedstrom allows her kids only the occasional sip. Others are even more squeamish. There is always the chance the nozzle has been sitting in a puddle of pesticide, and many people are uncertain whether water from an outside faucet is as clean as the indoor variety.

The biggest risk from hose water is probably the hose itself, according to the California-based Center for Environmental Health. The group, which specializes in sniffing out toxic content in consumer products, found traces of lead in many brands it tested. The center warned parents not to let kids drink from hoses, fill kiddie pools with them or even play in sprinklers. The group filed suit against the hose industry, and in 2004 several of the biggest manufacturers agreed in a settlement to reduce the lead levels and post warning labels on hoses that didn't comply.

Now there are drinking-water-safe hoses on the market, and the Center for Environmental Health recommends those for any kind of child play.

Of course, for those who do more toiling than frolicking in the yard, the hose is a tool of frequent frustration, the unwieldy serpent in a backyard Eden. Garden technology has invented the speaker concealed in a rock, the robot lawnmower and the seedless watermelon, but it has yet to cure the common kink.

"They can drive you crazy," said Connie Bowers, a gardener in Colesville, Md. "I used to get very frustrated as they got all tangled together."

Bowers said she has become a better hose jockey by watching how professional landscapers wrap hoses: letting the natural coil flip free as they spin them 'round and 'round their forearms. But a good part of her yard time is still consumed by hose management, keeping them from bulldozing the beds as she tugs them around, straightening out the hissing pinches, tucking them out of the trip zones.

Just preparing them for storage at the end of the season can take the better part of a day. She drains them, wraps them as tightly as possible and either ties them or coils them inside a small barrel or box for storage in her basement.

"It's easier to fold them tightly when they're still warm," she said.

A good hose is to a busy gardener what a good knife is to a serious chef. It pays to invest in quality, and it demands a lot of care if you want it to endure more than a summer or two.

Steve McCully still the black rubber hose from Sears that his dad gave him 20 years ago. He keeps it empty of water, coiled and out of the sun when he's not using it. Leaving a hose pressurized, even with a strong nozzle at the end, will eventually cause "sun bubbles" and weaken the hose walls, he said.

"If you take care of them, they'll last a long time," said McCully, garden manager at Behnke Nursery, estimating that nearly 1,000 feet of them snake around the suburban 6.2-acre property. The Behnke hoses are like the ropes on a sailing ship, and McCully is the exacting skipper.

"I give someone a C-plus for this one," McCully said, stopping to inspect a hose coiled semi-neatly against a fence post.

The No. 1 request from customers: "They want one that's not going to kink up," McCully said. "They all kink, but the rubber is the key. The more rubbery, the less they kink."

He recommends a pinch test. "If you feel that thicker wall, that's a good sign," he said. "That's what we look for, and we abuse a lot of hoses here."

SMALL

From Page 10

bedroom closet. The only furnishings in the room are his California king-size bed and a wall-mounted TV. When he added the bed, the wood closet doors could no longer open, so in typical fashion, the inventive retailer made changes.

New slate-gray, Belgian linen drapes, attached by rings to a metal track, pull back to reveal sports jackets arranged in a trio of subtle, earthy hues. Like items, such as V-neck sweaters, cashmere crews, short-sleeved Polos, long-sleeved Polos and button-down shirts, are precisely folded and stacked in neat piles—not so surprising, since Russell once worked as a fashion sales associate.

"I'm an expert in the art of folding," he quips.

"Seriously, most people have way too much stuff in their closets—and their homes. There's no reason to keep a raincoat hanging 365 days of the year when you live in Southern California—really. Just leave out things you really wear and love, and stash the rest away."

Good advice, especially for those residing in space-challenged apartments.

Just 10 years ago, Russell was living in Florida and working in the hospitality business when he decided to make the move from restaurant to retail and head west.

"I was more interested in watching CNN's `Style with Elsa Klinch' and reading Metropolitan Home magazine than in food and wine," he says.

For the next five years, the garrulous Russell worked as a personal shopper for Prada, followed by a stint at A'Maree's, a high-fashion boutique in nearby Newport Beach. He spent his spare time as a power seller on eBay, marketing high-end fashion and holding trunk shows at home to recycle "hardly worn haute couture."

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Trey Russell's second-story garden apartment is right behind his gift shop-boutique Aris, set in a former 1950s Volkswagen dealership in Laguna Beach, Calif.

Two years ago, he opened his version of a shop—a gift boutique, he calls it—in a former 1950s Volkswagen dealership. Russell runs it like a friendly neighborhood restaurant.

Customers are welcomed with offers of Pellegrino, cappuccino or a cup of Marco Polo Mariages Freres tea. Then there are the snacks served family-style—Java chips with spicy hummus, a bowl of chocolate almonds or ice pops for kids. On Saturdays, regulars know that mimosas and strawberries are served in the garden behind the store—all the better to wander into his nearby annex—two rooms beneath his apartment building that offer consignment clothing and Missoni linens.

But how does it feel when everything in your home is for sale, one might wonder?

Although he won't part with his pair of antique tortoise shells—"they're family heirlooms," he says—everything else has a price.

"Just the other day, a woman customer came in and fell in love with my linen sofa—gone," he says with a smile. "It's OK. I'll make a new one. Change is always good."

The Good Life

Healing: The power of pets

By CAROL GUZY
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

Pets ... makeup ... lights ... camera ... action!

The stars are 13 dogs, two cats, a guinea pig named LilyPigLips and a small group of breast cancer survivors.

The women have gathered for a calendar photo shoot to raise money for others with cancer and provide wigs, transportation and some assistance with the bills. The organization behind the event is Critters for the Cure—and because its members recognize the therapeutic value of pets, the charity also offers help with such things as vet bills and dog-walking.

Ali Stark, 70, of Gaithersburg, Md., was the inspiration for the calendar. Having received her diagnosis 32 years ago, she's now in Stage IV: "I've had metastatic breast cancer all over the place, all over my body, my liver, my bones. It cracked a rib and (entered) the brain, and then I thought, `How dare you go to my brain?' " Stark credits her survival to Herceptin, which she calls a miracle drug, to her "angels"—her son, Cliff; her husband, Joseph; and her best friend, Clancy Kress (president of Critters for the Cure)—and to her two beloved dogs.

Stark lost her 9-year-old standard poodle, Molly, last year to cancer as she was struggling with her own illness, and it took her a while to open her heart to a feisty yorkie-poo. "Molly was like my soul," she says. "It was very hard on me because the two of us were fighting cancer and Molly lost her battle, and I was grieving a tremendous amount. But along came Eloise. ... I think she is one of the things keeping me going, keeping me alive. ... So, I am blessed. No matter what happens from here on in, I feel blessed."

THE WASHINGTON POST

Elizabeth Shepard, right, and her mother, Deborah Cochrane, prepare for their portrait; with them is Leslie Foxman and Cabbage. They have gathered for a calendar photo shoot to raise money for others with cancer. The organization behind the event is Critters for the Cure.

There are some common themes in the way the women talk about how their pets have journeyed with them through their cancer. "Just their warm heartbeat lying next to me was incredibly healing," says Connie Reider, who finds purpose in a workshop she teaches for cancer survivors called INscape, the Healing Art of Photography, and finds comfort in her Portuguese water dog named Splash.

"It didn't matter whether I was bald, or exhausted, or felt like a toxic waste dump, they were there to curl up next to me to nap or purr or entertain," says Patricia Liberatore about her two Maine coon cats. "The humans in my life were pretty spectacular. ... But in the quiet times, the middle of the night when the demons came out to whisper a dreaded thought, or in the day when a nap was essential, or when tears would flow for no apparent reason, it was the girls, my critters, who gave comfort."

For some, the animals are more than a source of solace. Julia Scott learned to laugh her way through her illness, she says as she paints her dog's nails orange for Halloween. Leslie Foxman chuckles as she scratches LilyPigLips under the chin.

Perhaps the most striking story comes from Bev Gilstrap-Noble, who credits her dog, Chevis, with detecting her cancer early. His relentless sniffing at her breast encouraged her to get checked again, even after a negative biopsy. He was, she says, "her second opinion."

Gilstrap-Noble's is one of many inspirational stories in Critters Speak, the nonprofit's magazine, which documents the women's cancer journeys, says Kress, who founded Critters for the Cure in 2006. Working together "makes us laugh, makes us cry a little bit. ... It's something that helps other women that might be going through the same experience. It gives them something to give them hope."

Ali Stark held a recital recently to raise funds for Critters for the Cure.

Ali Stark at home with Eloise: "I'm so very happy; she is a jewel.... I am entertained and brought to joyful laughter every day."

Cancer survivor Surrae Holloway shows Buster his photo. A fund-raising calendar celebrates the healing power of pets.

Paws and effect

(c) 2008, The Washington Post

A Washington area breast cancer survivors group called Critters for the Cure has published a fund-raising calendar celebrating the healing power of pets. Post photographer Carol Guzy went to watch the pets and their people at the photo shoot.

For more photos and to hear the women tell their stories, go to www.washingtonpost.com/health

Save money and help your pet

By JURA KONCIUS
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

Sure, you could cut down on the number of pet toys you buy, but there are many other practical ways to cut the cost of pet care in these challenging economic times.

We called California pet expert Warren Eckstein, who has a new Saturday radio show on Sirius, to get some ideas:

■ If your vet prescribes medications such as antibiotics or anti-inflammatory drugs that are used for humans as well as animals, don't always fill the prescription at the vet's office. Try going to a low cost pharmacy such as Costco or Wal-Mart.

■ Don't forgo taking your pet for annual check-ups. Early diagnosis of a condition or serious disease is so important for your pet's well being and it can also save you big money.

■ Consider feeding your dogs or cats a nationally advertised brand of dog food available in supermarkets or pet super stores instead of the more expensive or designer varieties. Check with your vet first, of course, before making any changes in your pet's diet and get their advice. Look for the AAFCO label (Association of American Feed Control Officials) on the pet food packaging; they test the nutritional value of pet foods.

■ Fresh air and exercise go a long way in saving money because your pet will be a whole lot healthier in general. Eckstein also likes to give dogs a daily massage.

■ ■ ■

Your pet deserves as nice a bed as you have.

Today, stores are filled with dog and cat beds made of trendy fabrics with cushy fillings. But what is really the most comfortable sleeping spot for your pet that is easy for you to keep clean?

A new book "Clean Home, Green Home" by Kimberly Delaney (Morris Book Publishing/Globe Pequot Press; $20) has some great common sense ideas for pet beds that also make good eco-sense.

■ The most important consideration in choosing a bed is washability. Beds can harbor pets, but also fleas and dust mites, so washing the covers frequently is important. Between washings, shake the bed outdoors on a regular basis. This can keep dander and dirt from spreading around the house.

■ Try to find bedding that is filled with natural materials and covered with natural fibers. She suggests hemp, wool and organic cotton for exteriors. Natural fillings include kapok, buckwheat and recycled soda bottles. Avoid beds filled with petroleum based polyurethane foam—it is flammable and might contain formaldehyde.

■ Cedar chips are a good choice for a filling because they deter fleas and naturally absorb odors.

■ ■ ■

More than 6 million American households have birds as pets. In fact, there are more than 16 million pet birds out there, according to the American Pet Products Association.

If you are considering buying a bird, here are some things to consider:

■ Study the different characteristics of each breed and make sure the bird you choose will fit in with your lifestyle. Some birds like a lot of attention, and need toys and interaction to prevent from becoming bored. Some love to chatter and others love to scream, so decide whether you and your family (and neighbors) are comfortable with that if you choose something like a noisy macaw.

■ Buy only from a specialized breeder or a reputable pet store.

■ Make sure the bird looks healthy; check out if its eyes are clear.

■ Take your bird for a check-up at your vet as soon after you get it as possible.

For more information, contact your local veterinarian and local clubs of bird fanciers.

Bob Weber Jr.'s Slylock Fox and Comics for Kids

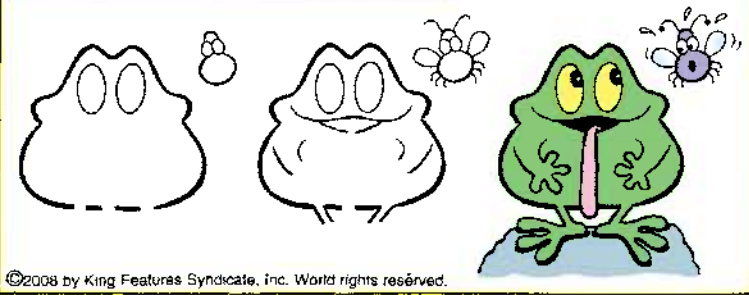
Which scene is slightly different from the other two?

Answer -- Number two.

Count Weirdly is asking for money to build an observatory atop a Las Vegas casino. Weirdly says tourists will flock to the star-gazing attraction, and he and the investors will make a bundle of money. Slylock Fox says investing in Weirdly's project is a poor gamble. Why?

Answer -- The bright lights of Las Vegas produce light pollution that obscures and diminishes the brilliance of the stars, making this location a poor site for viewing.

HOW TO DRAW a hungry frog



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YOUR DRAWING

Today's terrific artist is Jeffrey, of Oro Valley, AZ

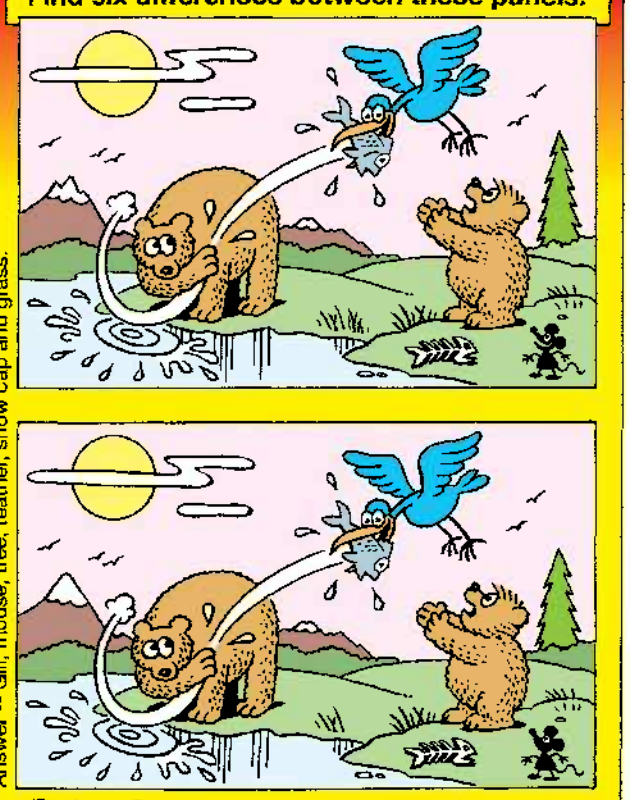
Submit your drawings at **www.kidcartoonists.com**

Which one of these planets is smaller than Earth?

a) Jupiter
b) Mercury
c) Saturn
d) Neptune

Answer -- b) Mercury is less than half the size of Earth.

Find six differences between these panels.

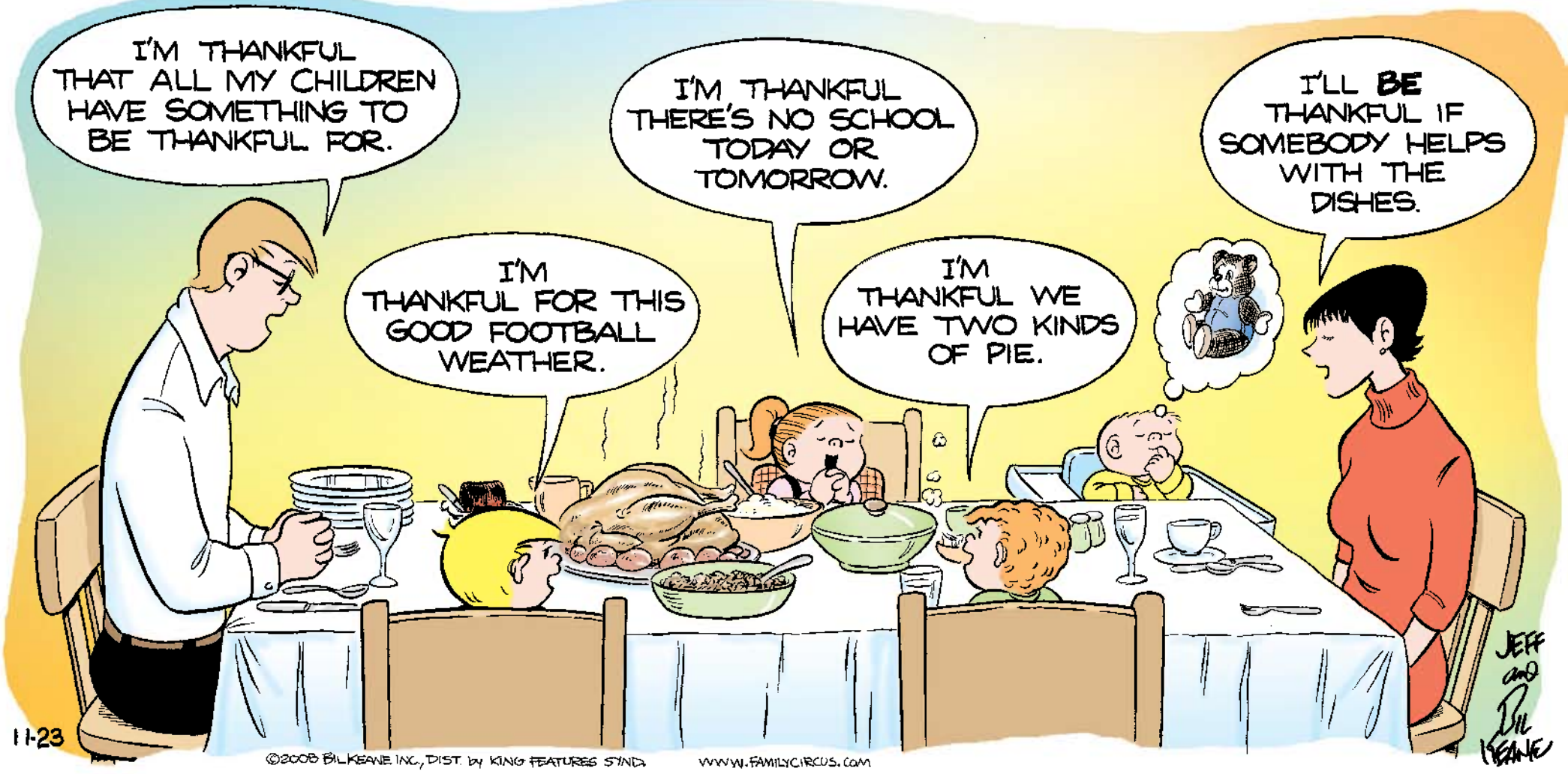


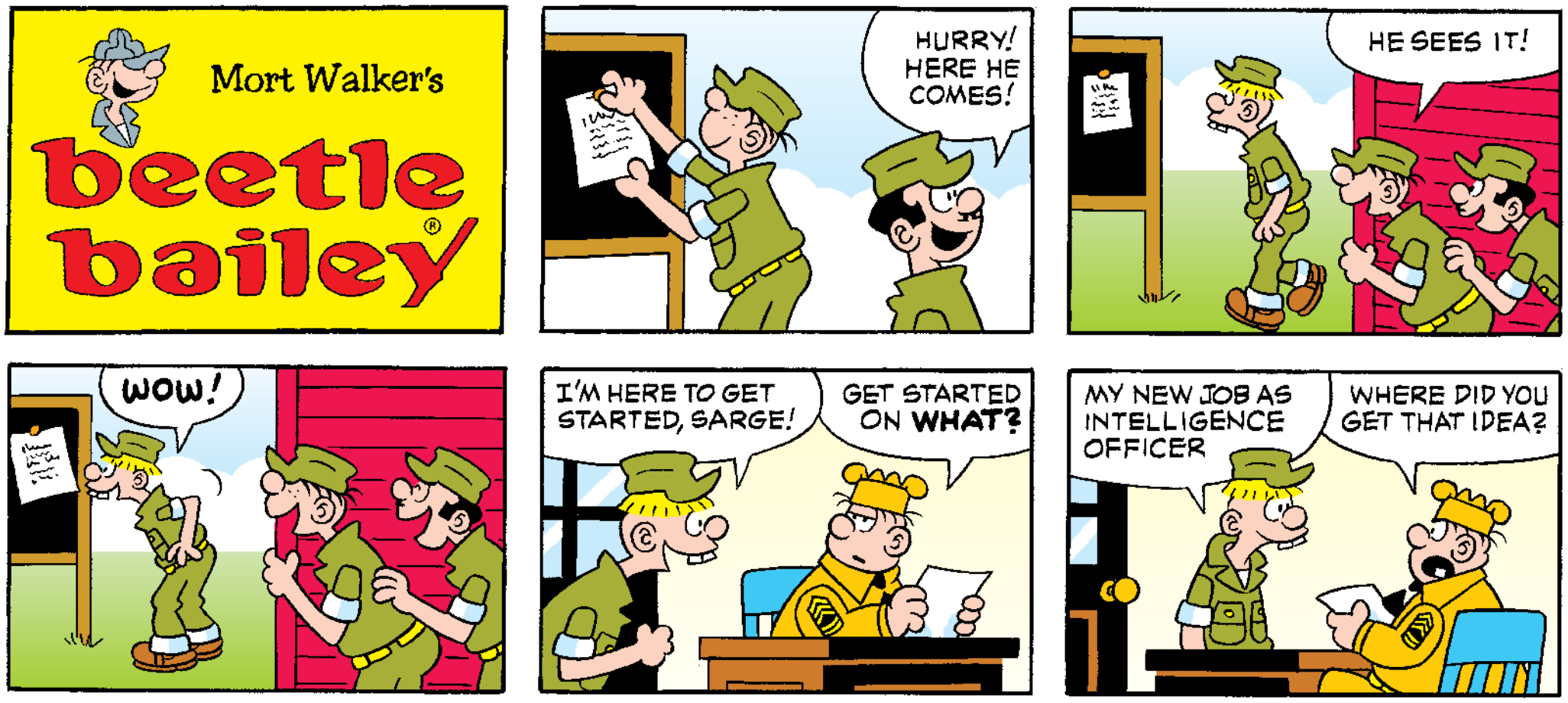
Answer -- Gill, mouse, tree, feather, snow cap and grass.

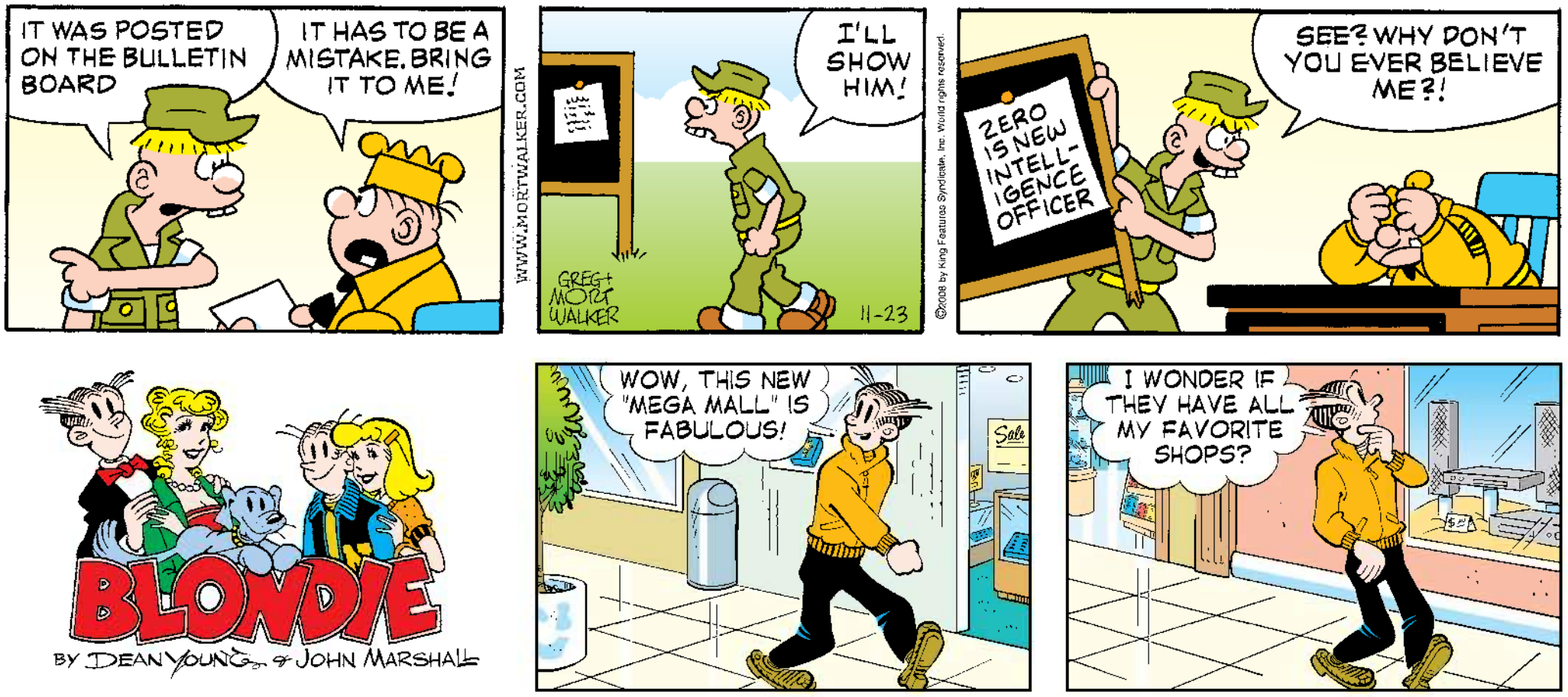
The fourth ***Find The Six Differences*** collection is here. Send $4 (check/money order in U.S. funds made payable to King Features) with your name and address to **Six differences No. 4** P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475

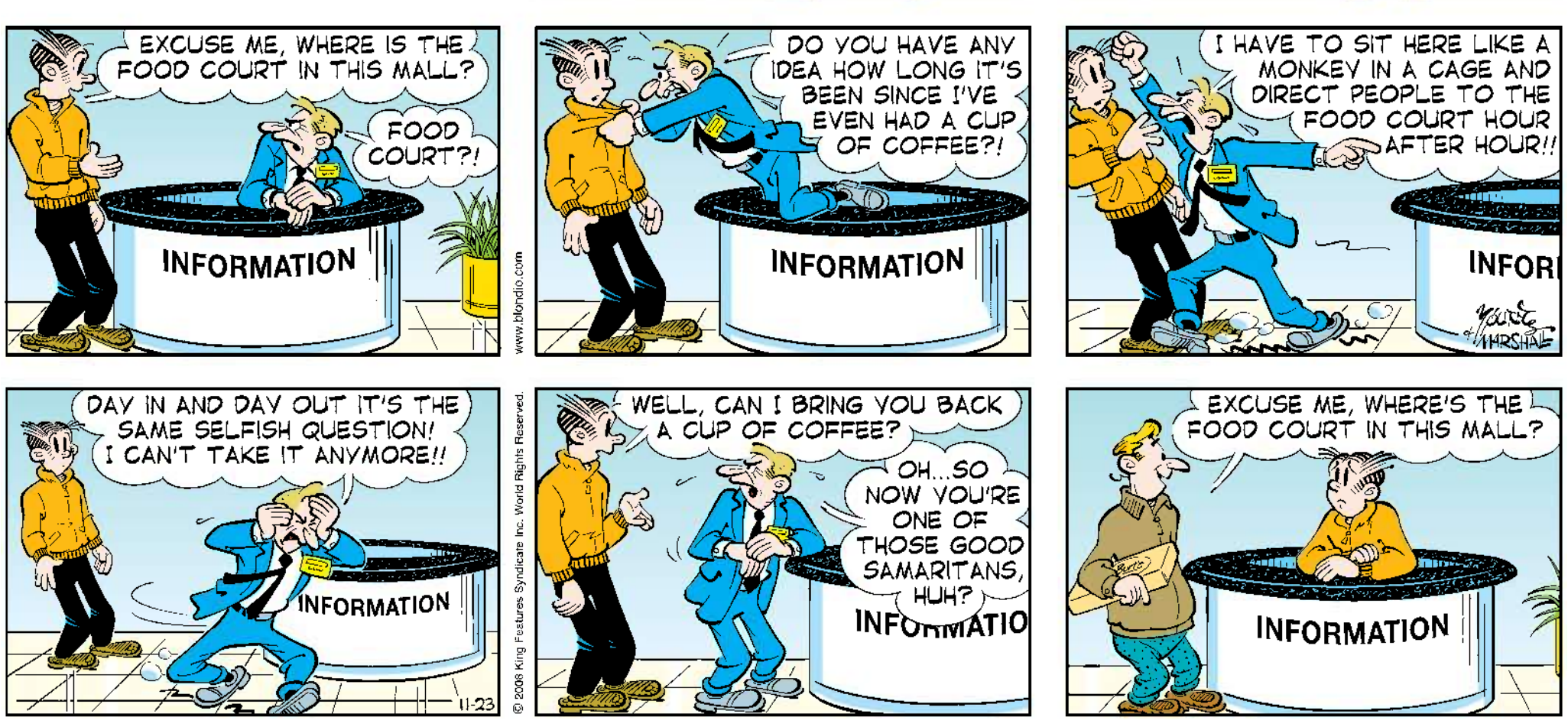
THE FAMILY CIRCUS®

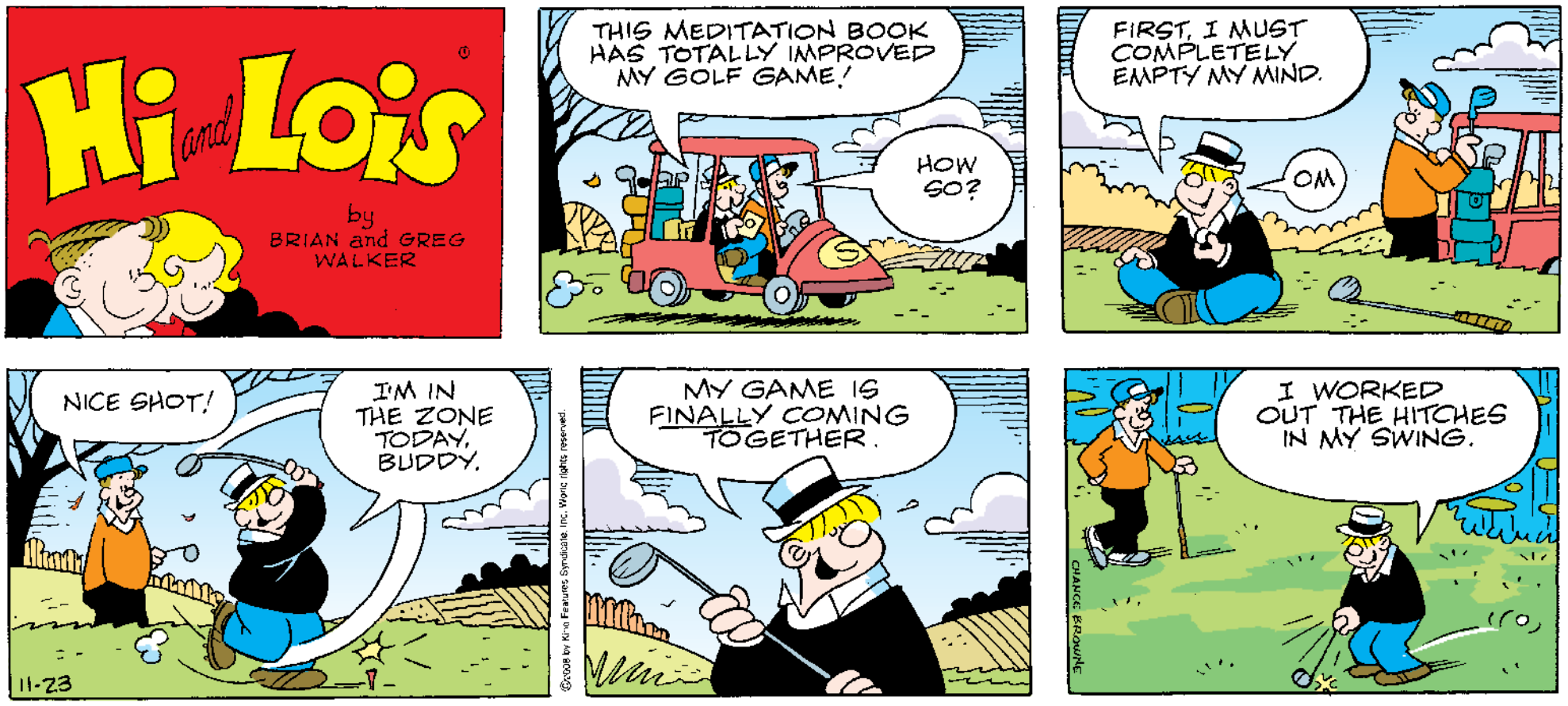
By Bil Keane

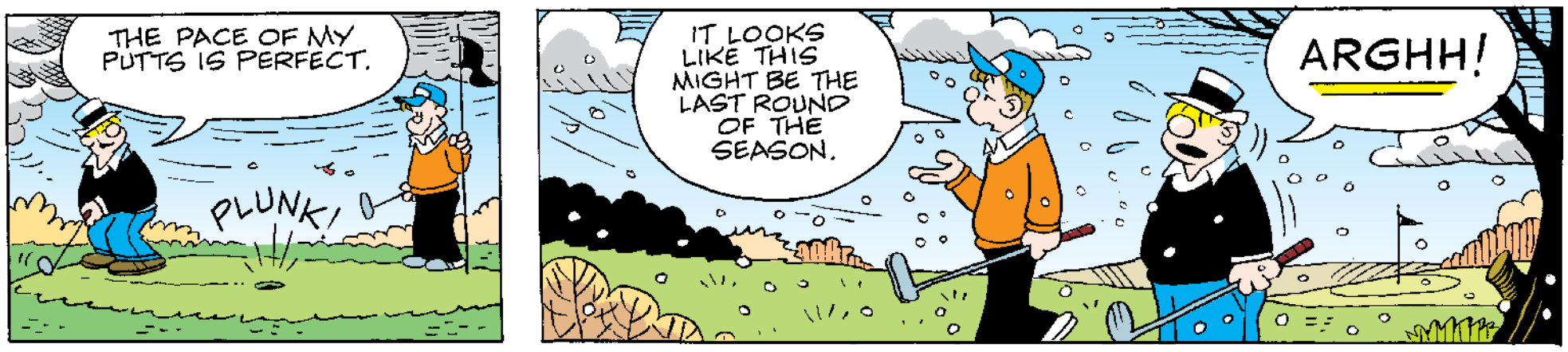

I'M THANKFUL THAT ALL MY CHILDREN HAVE SOMETHING TO BE THANKFUL FOR.
I'M THANKFUL FOR THIS GOOD FOOTBALL WEATHER.
I'M THANKFUL THERE'S NO SCHOOL TODAY OR TOMORROW.
I'M THANKFUL WE HAVE TWO KINDS OF PIE.
I'LL BE THANKFUL IF SOMEBODY HELPS WITH THE DISHES.
11-23
©2008 BILKEANE INC., DIST. by KING FEATURES SYND.
WWW.FAMILYCIRCUS.COM
JEFF and BIL KEANE

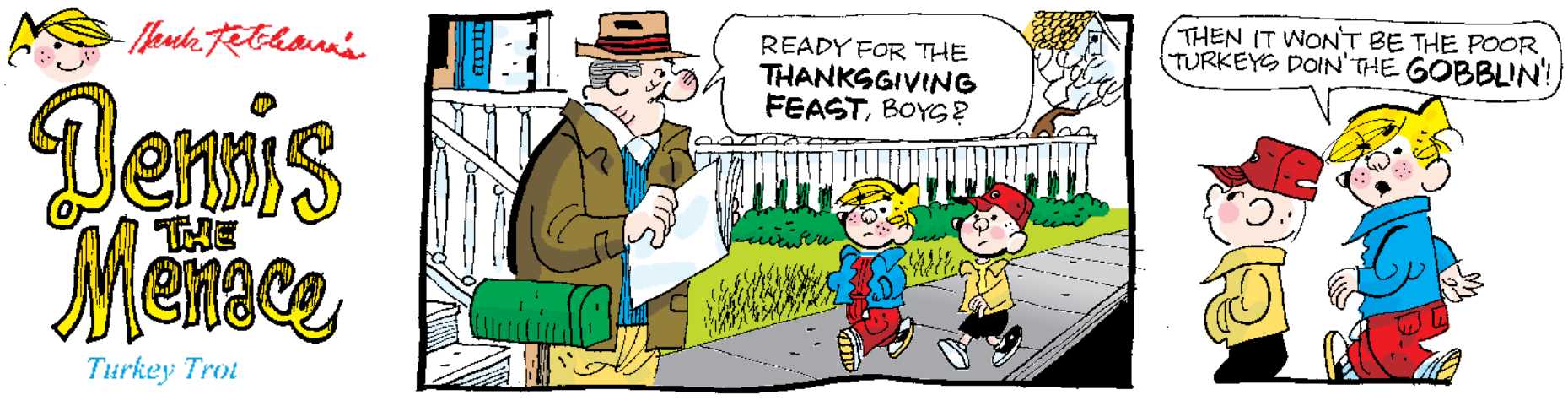

Mort Walker's
beetle bailey®
HURRY! HERE HE COMES!
HE SEES IT!
WOW!
I'M HERE TO GET STARTED, SARGE!
GET STARTED ON WHAT?
MY NEW JOB AS INTELLIGENCE OFFICER
WHERE DID YOU GET THAT IDEA?

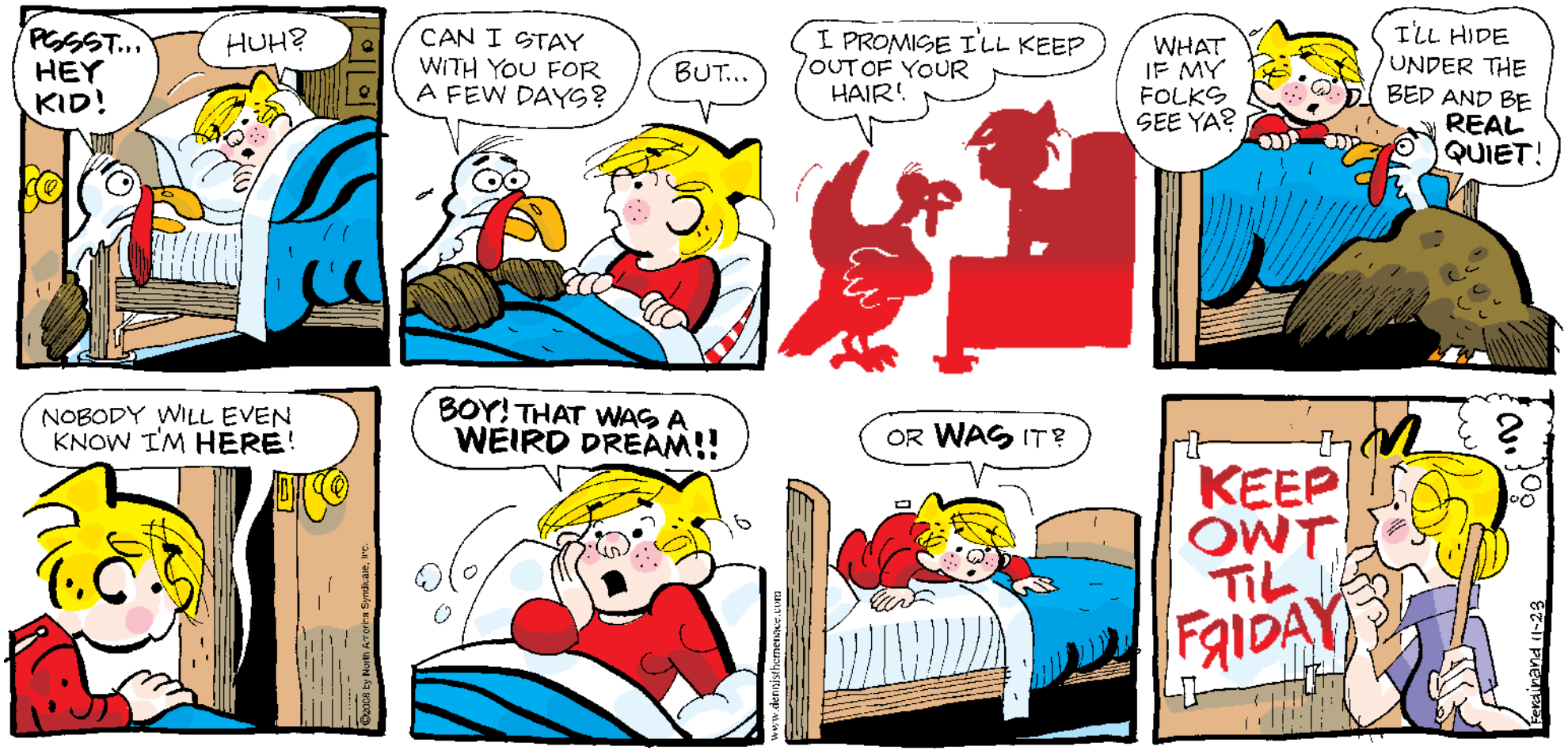

IT WAS POSTED ON THE BULLETIN BOARD
IT HAS TO BE A MISTAKE. BRING IT TO ME!
WWW.MORTWALKER.COM
I'LL SHOW HIM!
GREG+ MORT WALKER
11-23
ZERO IS NEW INTELL-IGENCE OFFICER
SEE? WHY DON'T YOU EVER BELIEVE ME?!
©2008 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.
BLONDIE
BY DEAN YOUNG & JOHN MARSHALL
WOW, THIS NEW "MEGA MALL" IS FABULOUS!
I WONDER IF THEY HAVE ALL MY FAVORITE SHOPS?


EXCUSE ME, WHERE IS THE FOOD COURT IN THIS MALL?
FOOD COURT?!
INFORMATION
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW LONG IT'S BEEN SINCE I'VE EVEN HAD A CUP OF COFFEE?!
I HAVE TO SIT HERE LIKE A MONKEY IN A CAGE AND DIRECT PEOPLE TO THE FOOD COURT HOUR AFTER HOUR!!
www.blondie.com
DAY IN AND DAY OUT IT'S THE SAME SELFISH QUESTION! I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE!!
11-23
© 2008 King Features Syndicate Inc. World Rights Reserved.
WELL, CAN I BRING YOU BACK A CUP OF COFFEE?
OH...SO NOW YOU'RE ONE OF THOSE GOOD SAMARITANS, HUH?
EXCUSE ME, WHERE'S THE FOOD COURT IN THIS MALL?


Hi and Lois
by BRIAN and GREG WALKER
THIS MEDITATION BOOK HAS TOTALLY IMPROVED MY GOLF GAME!
HOW SO?
FIRST, I MUST COMPLETELY EMPTY MY MIND.
OM
NICE SHOT!
I'M IN THE ZONE TODAY, BUDDY.
11-23
©2008 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.
MY GAME IS FINALLY COMING TOGETHER.
I WORKED OUT THE HITCHES IN MY SWING.
CHANCE BROWNE


THE PACE OF MY PUTTS IS PERFECT.
PLUNK!
IT LOOKS LIKE THIS MIGHT BE THE LAST ROUND OF THE SEASON.
ARGHH!


Hank Ketcham's
Dennis the Menace
Turkey Trot
READY FOR THE THANKSGIVING FEAST, BOYS?
THEN IT WON'T BE THE POOR TURKEYS DOIN' THE GOBBLIN'!


PSSST... HEY KID!
HUH?
CAN I STAY WITH YOU FOR A FEW DAYS?
BUT...
I PROMISE I'LL KEEP OUT OF YOUR HAIR!
WHAT IF MY FOLKS SEE YA?
I'LL HIDE UNDER THE BED AND BE REAL QUIET!
NOBODY WILL EVEN KNOW I'M HERE!
©2008 by North America Syndicate, Inc.
BOY! THAT WAS A WEIRD DREAM!!
www.dennisthemenace.com
OR WAS IT?
KEEP OWT TIL FRIDAY
?
Ferdinand 11-23

BABY BLUES™
BY RICK KIRKMAN & JERRY SCOTT
VVVVVVVVVVVVV
ZOE, WILL YOU PICK UP YOUR SHOES?
SURE, MOM.
HEY! DON'T TOUCH MY CRAYONS, WREN!
UM...
AND STAY OFF MY PAPER!
ZOE? THE SHOES?
AAUGHH! YOU RIPPED IT!
WHAT DID I SAY? HUH? WHAT DID I JUST SAY???
TCH! HOW DO YOU COMMUNICATE WITH SOMEONE WHO WON'T LISTEN?
>,SIGH!<
© 2008, Baby Blues Partnership Dist. by King Features Syndicate
KIRKMAN & SCOTT
www.babyblues.com

Salome's Stars

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Although your energy level is high, be careful not to commit to too many projects at this time. You'll do better focusing on just a few tasks rather than spreading yourself too thin.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Your heart might be leading you in one direction, but pay attention to your keen Bovine intellect. I'm cautioning you to think things through before making any commitments.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Your "serious" Twin has been dominant in your life for quite a while. It's time now to let that "wilder" half take you out for some good times—perhaps with someone very special.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Career aspects are high for Moon Children who make a good impression. Show people not only what you can already do, but also how you can be more valuable to them in the future.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) Things start to brighten for the Lion's immediate financial future. But be careful to resist the urge to splurge. You need to tuck something away to help you through another tight period.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) Having to do too many tasks in too short a time could lower your mood to just above the grumbling level. But if you handle things one at a time, you'll get through it all soon enough.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) Your usually carefully made holiday plans could be subject to change later this month. Use this week to prepare for that possibility by starting a Plan B just in case you need it.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) Be careful about joining a colleague's plan to solve a workplace problem. Investigate it thoroughly. Otherwise, you could find yourself in a predicament with other associates.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Slow down that high-paced whirl you've been on. Spending quiet time alone or with people you care for can be both physically and spiritually restorative.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) Make suggestions, not demands. You'll be more successful in getting people to follow your lead if you exercise quiet patience instead of strong persuasion to get your ideas across.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) You still need more facts before you can make an informed career choice. One note of caution: Be careful about whom you ask for that information; otherwise, you could be misled.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) Changing situations through the end of the week could lead to some challenging opportunities for those perspicacious Pisceans who know how to make them work to their advantage.

BORN THIS WEEK: You have a way of being both daring and cautious, traits that could make you a research scientist or maybe even a rocket-ship designer.

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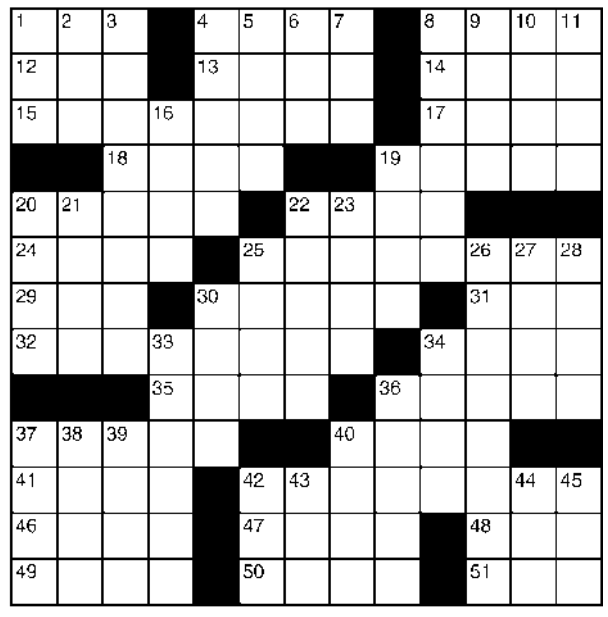
King Crossword



ACROSS
1 River structure
4 Hackman or Rayburn
8 Got a glimpse of
12 Sapporo sash
13 Finished
14 Give a makeover to
15 BBQ wood
17 Use a teaspoon
18 Wrap, as a flag
19 Clergy counterpart
20 Homeric narrative
22 Hearts, for one
24 Make aspic
25 Creta-ceous or Jurassic
29 Time of your life?
30 Refuge
31 Popular card game
32 Answer-ing machine's info
34 Impale
35 Doppel-ganger
36 "Oh, God" star
37 Trembled
40 Kansas city
41 Frau's mate
42 Crazy (Var.)
46 Incite
47 Neighbor of Sask.
48 Conclu-sion
49 Santa's sackful
50 Satiate
51 Pair on stage

DOWN
1 Comic DeLuise
2 Honest politician
3 Puts in the wrong folder
4 Pumpkin or cucumber
5 Satan's field
6 Trawler need
7 Prior to
8 Poor substitute
9 Bigfoot's cousin
10 Tend texts
11 Hunky- —
16 Campus area
19 Narnia's Aslan, e.g.
20 Shiite leader
21 Theater box
22 Early evening
23 Works with
25 Creche trio
26 Not just peeved
27 — instant
28 Corn eaters' castoffs
30 War-monger
33 Mall units
34 Enterprise officer
36 Heidi of TV's "Hotel"
37 Close
38 Medal earner
39 Rampant revelry
40 Ratio phrase
42 PC alternative
43 Right angle
44 Wilde-beest
45 Tokyo, once

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top ten

Consumer Package Goods*

1. Soft Drinks
2. Milk
3. Cigarettes
4. Cereal
5. Bread
6. Videos
7. Bottled Water
8. Toilet Paper
9. Light Beer
10. Cookies

*Retail sales

Source: www.nielsen.com

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KING CROSSWORD LAST SUNDAY'S ANSWERS

C	H	A	R		A	D	O		T	A	O	S
L	O	V	E		N	I	P		U	R	G	E
A	M	O	S		G	E	T	S	M	A	R	T
N	E	W	H	A	R	T		T	U	B	E	S
			I	V	Y		S	O	L			
E	L	O	P	E		P	O	P	T	A	R	T
B	E	T			B	U	Y			I	I	I
B	I	T	P	A	R	T		S	U	R	G	E
			R	N	A		U	R	N			
S	H	E	I	K		C	L	I	P	A	R	T
P	I	E	C	H	A	R	T		A	L	O	E
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United States

Geithner likely treasury pick; Clinton 'on track'

AP

Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke, right, listens to Timothy Geithner, president of the New York Federal Reserve, before speaking at the Economic Club of New York.

WASHINGTON (AP)—President-elect Barack Obama intends to name Timothy Geithner, president of the New York Federal Reserve, as his treasury secretary to confront the nation's intense economic turmoil, senior Democratic officials said Friday. The stock market soared on the news. Word of Geithner's likely selection emerged as New York Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, in line to become secretary of state, said through a spokesman that discussions were on track for her appointment but no final arrangement had been made.

Obama plans to announce Geithner's appointment in Chicago on Monday, barring an unforeseen snag in a background check that is nearly complete, said one of the senior officials, both of whom were familiar with the deliberations.

Obama's choice for attorney general, a third critical post as the president-elect rounds out his top Cabinet echelon, is Eric Holder, who held the No. 2 slot in the Justice Department in President Bill Clinton's administration.

If nominated and confirmed by the Senate, Geithner, 47, would assume chief responsibility for tackling an economic slowdown and credit crunch that threaten to create the deepest recession in more than a generation. In his current post in New York, he has played a key role in the government's response to the financial crisis and has worked closely with Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson and Ben Bernanke, chairman of the Federal Reserve.

As a Treasury Department official during the Clinton administration, Geithner (pronounced GITE-ner) dealt with international financial crises and played a major part in negotiating assistance packages for South Korea and Brazil.

Lawrence Summers, a former treasury secretary and one-time Harvard University president, was being considered as an economic adviser. Economic posts also seemed likely for Obama's top two economic advisers during his campaign, Austan Goolsbee and Jason Furman.

Officials also said New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson had emerged as a likely pick as commerce secretary, although he had hoped to be secretary of state. Like Clinton, he was a rival of Obama's for the Democratic presidential nomination last winter. He dropped out after the early contests, though, and soon threw his support behind the eventual winner.

The officials spoke only on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to publicly discuss the anticipated appointments.

Obama keeps low profile in auto industry rescue talks

WASHINGTON (AP)—While President-elect Barack Obama publicly sidelined himself during congressional debate over an auto industry bailout this week, he and his top aides quietly prodded congressional leaders to find a solution to rescue struggling automakers. Obama personally talked to congressional leaders, while his new chief of staff, Rahm Emanuel, and congressional liaison, Phil Schiliro, were routinely dialed into conference calls to discuss the status of negotiations.

"They basically were encouraging us to stay at the table and get something done," said Sen. Debbie Stabenow, D-Mich., one of the senators involved in the talks.

In public as president-elect, Obama has addressed the auto industry crisis only three times—in his postelection news conference, a taped radio address last Saturday and an interview on CBS' "60 Minutes."

"The Obama team has to step up," Sen. Christopher Dodd, the chairman of the Senate banking committee and one of the lead negotiators, said in Hartford, Conn., on Friday. "In the minds of the people, this is the Obama administration. I don't think we can wait until Jan. 20."

Obama and his team have repeatedly asserted that during the transition, President George W. Bush remains the chief executive and that Obama does not want to intrude on his authority. Obama did move closer to making top economic appointments on Friday, news that a Dodd aide said the Connecticut senator welcomed.

But Obama's low-key role in the auto rescue debate also demonstrates the Obama team's reluctance to weigh in on a congressional dispute that was not only partisan but also divided House and Senate Democrats. With a strong chance that a deal could fail, a high-profile role for Obama would have been risky and could have linked him too closely to a congressional stalemate.

Fla. teen commits suicide with live Web audience

MIAMI (AP)—A college student committed suicide by taking a drug overdose in front of a live webcam as some computer users egged him on, others tried to talk him out of it, and another messaged OMG in horror when it became clear it was no joke. Some watchers contacted the Web site to notify police, but by the time officers entered Abraham Biggs' home—a scene also captured on the Internet—it was too late.

Biggs, a 19-year-old Broward College student who suffered from what his family said was bipolar disorder, or manic depression, lay dead on his bed in his father's Pembroke Pines house Wednesday afternoon, the camera still running 12 hours after Biggs announced his intentions online around 3 a.m.

It was unclear how many people watched it unfold.

Biggs was not the first person to commit suicide with a webcam rolling. But the drawn-out drama—and the reaction of those watching—was seen as an extreme example of young people's penchant for sharing intimate details about themselves over the Internet.

Biggs' family was infuriated that no one acted sooner to save him, neither the viewers nor the Web site that hosted the live video, Justin.tv. The Web site shows a video image, with a space alongside where computer users can instantly post comments.

Only when police arrived did the Web feed stop, "so that's 12 hours of watching," said the victim's sister, Rosalind Bigg. "They got hits, they got viewers, nothing happened for hours."

She added: "It didn't have to be."

An autopsy concluded Biggs died from a combination of opiates and benzodiazepine, which his family said was prescribed for his bipolar disorder.

Biggs announced his plans to kill himself over a Web site for bodybuilders, authorities said. But some users told investigators they did not take him seriously because he had threatened suicide on the site before.

Neb. lawmakers OK age limit for safe-haven law

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP)—Gov. Dave Heineman signed into law Friday a bill adding a 30-day age limit to a safe-haven law that allowed 35 children—including teenagers as old as 17—to be abandoned at state hospitals. The law, approved hours earlier by the Legislature in a 45-3 vote, goes into effect Saturday, and makes Nebraska the 14th state with a 30-day age cap. It had been the only state with a safe-haven law without an age limit.

"I think this solves the immediate problem of adolescents being abandoned," said state Sen. Kent Rogert. "These kids are old enough to know they're being dropped off, and that's not good."

The law was meant to prevent newborns from being dumped in trash bins or worse.

But it has been used to abandon 35 children at state hospitals since July—many of them preteens or teenagers as old as 17.

Hospital officials have described children crying hysterically as they pleaded with their parents not to leave them.

Five of the children have been from other states, including from as far away as Florida and Michigan. The law was not revised to preclude infants from other states from being dropped off.

ACROSS THE NATION

Prosecutor who had Cheney indicted yells at judge

RAYMONDVILLE, Texas (AP)—A county prosecutor who brought indictments this week against Vice President Dick Cheney and others pounded his fist and shouted at the judge Friday during a routine hearing. Willacy County District Attorney Juan Angel Guerra asked Presiding Judge Manuel Banales to recuse himself from the case, which alleges abuse at federally run prisons. Attorneys for the vice president and other defendants leapt to their feet in objection as Guerra pounded the table and accused Banales of giving the defendants special treatment. "Now all of a sudden there is urgency," Guerra shouted. "Eighteen months you kept me indicted through the election." Guerra lost his bid for re-election in the March primary and will leave office in January. He was indicted last year on charges he extorted money from a bail bond company and used his office for personal business, but the charges were dismissed last month.

Year later, baby ordered back to adoptive parents

OMAHA, Neb. (AP)—The Nebraska Supreme Court on Friday ordered a year-old boy back into the home of an adoptive couple who had to give him up months ago after not telling the biological family the woman was pregnant. The court ruled that the boy—who has been living with his biological grandparents and is known by two names—should never have been taken from adoptive parents Jason and Angela Vesely because nothing in a written agreement required them to tell the Nebraska Children's Home Society that Angela was pregnant. The ruling won't take effect for at least 10 days, but both the adoption agency and the biological family could fight the decision, potentially delaying the boy's move.

US gas prices dip below $2, lowest in 3-plus years

HOUSTON (AP)—Only four months after peaking at an unheard of $4.11 a gallon, the national average price for gasoline tumbled below $2 Friday, its lowest point in more than three years. Yet the global economic contrast between then and now could not be more stark. On March 9, 2005, the last time gasoline cost less than $2, the Dow Jones industrial average closed at 10,805.63. After a huge rally Friday, the Dow closed at 8,046.42. There was muted joy for consumers wading through an economy that's almost certainly in recession, with thousands of jobs being lost and mortgage foreclosures continuing to rise to record levels. On the New York Mercantile Exchange, where oil futures seemed destined to breach $200 just a few months ago, pessimism was an understatement. "At this point, all we can say with any degree of confidence is that crude oil ... will not trade below zero," trader and analyst Stephen Schork said Friday in a tongue-in-cheek analysis of the market's swoon.

Asia

Bush rallies China's help on North Korea

LIMA, Peru (AP)—In a last dash of diplomacy, President George W. Bush on Friday sought China's help in pinning down North Korea to keep its shaky promises of nuclear disarmament.

Bush and Chinese President Hu Jintao privately tried to push along a way to verify North Korea's nuclear declarations—the latest hang-up in a showdown that has vexed six nations.

The meeting came as Bush began his last scheduled foreign journey, at a yearly Asia-Pacific forum, where the world's economic collapse and the North Korea standoff dominated.

Bush even allowed that he "felt a little nostalgic" over his final meeting as a head of state with Hu, White House press secretary Dana Perino said. It was some rare reflection from Bush, a nod to his ties with the leader of a communist nation that is both friend and foe.

North Korea has agreed to give up its nuclear weapons in exchange for coveted aid and diplomatic recognition, a deal arranged with the U.S., China, Russia, Japan and South Korea. But it has not fully allowed outside inspectors, and talks have repeatedly gone off course.

Bush wants to emerge from the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, also known as APEC, with firm plans for the six countries to meet in Beijing, perhaps in early December. The goal would be to formally agree on the way to verify North Korea's nuclear capabilities.

Perino said Bush and Hu discussed that meeting, but no date has been set.

The president's other main goal in Peru is to steady the shuddering economy by rallying more Pacific Rim nations to shore up global financial markets. But even that step would soon be handed to his successor, Democrat Barack Obama, who replaces Bush in just two months.

AP

U.S. President George W. Bush, left, greets President Hu Jintao of China before their meeting at the APEC Summit in Lima, Peru,Friday, Nov. 21, 2008.

The vast economic downturn, rooted first in the United States, hangs over the meeting. Bush is trumpeting what he calls the key to a rebound: free markets, trade and people.

"We're facing a difficult challenge and there will be tough days ahead," Bush said in a Saturday radio address released early by the White House. "But by relying on these principles, we can be confident in the future of our nation and the world."

In Bush's sole public appearance Friday, he was literally gone in a flash. He shook hands with Hu in a photo opportunity that lasted under 10 seconds. Neither offered comment.

Privately, the two discussed a familiar range of topics, according to the White House: the economic crisis, conflicts of religious freedom, trouble spots such as Iran and Sudan.

Bush's pace picks up Saturday in the Peruvian capital of Lima. He will deliver a pro-trade economic speech, attend meetings of the 21-nation APEC coalition and meet individually with the heads of Canada, Russia, Japan and South Korea.

Across the weekend, Bush is meeting with leaders of the four other countries involved in ridding North Korea of its nuclear weapons program. That effort appeared to get back on track when the U.S. removed North Korea from its list of nations that sponsor terrorism, but North Korea has since balked at allowing inspectors to take samples from its main nuclear complex.

"Our primary goal is to get back to the negotiating table in Beijing," said Dennis Wilder, senior director for Asian affairs at the National Security Council.

Wilder said the broader aim of the so-called six-party talks is to leave "a process in place that the next administration can work with. And I think we will do that."

On the economy, Bush arrived with a turbulent trail behind him this week: more startling drops in the stock market only partially made up for by a Wall Street climb on Friday, the highest level of unemployment claims in 16 years, and no solution for flailing automakers.

Before leaving the White House, Bush quickly signed an extension of aid for jobless workers, hardly the kind of bill any president relishes.

Tibetan exiles debate the future of the movement

DHARMSALA, India (AP)—Out of the hundreds of Tibetan leaders who have flocked here for a pivotal summit on Tibet's future, few understand the hardships there better than a recently arrived barley farmer.

The stocky 32-year-old left his Tibetan village last month to hike across the mountains to meet the Dalai Lama in Dharmsala, the spiritual leader's home in exile. The Chinese have stepped up security in the wake of the March uprising, he says, making a hard life even harder. Now, he believes it's time to move past the measured path of compromise with China, called "the middle way."

"I'm looking for complete independence," said the farmer, who declined to give his name because he planned to return to Tibet and feared retribution. "We don't need to stay with China."

"But," he continued, "if His Holiness goes for 'the middle way' approach, I will support the Dalai Lama."

If the farmer was conflicted, he had plenty of company in an auditorium up the hill, where 581 exile leaders from around the world—from Boston to Los Angeles to Britain to Spain and Nepal—gathered this week to find a way to move their struggle forward.

What emerged, more often than not, has been a cacophony of disparate voices, all calling for some form of freedom for Tibet, but uncertain what shape it should take.

Abandon compromise and push for independence? Press on with the current strategy? End the dialogue with China? Push for "self determination?" Full autonomy? Every permutation is under discussion, and a resolution is expected to be announced Saturday at the meeting's close.

Gates would like to add US forces in Afghanistan

CORNWALLIS, Nova Scotia (AP)—Defense Secretary Robert Gates said Friday he would like to add significant U.S. forces to the war in Afghanistan before national elections scheduled for next year, and that grim depictions of backsliding in the seven-year-old war are "far too pessimistic."

Gates said the additional forces would give greater security for fall elections in Afghanistan, and predicted that security conditions will "be under enough control to allow the elections to take place." Secure successful elections are probably the most important goal for Afghanistan next year, Gates said.

"Everyone knows we face significant challenges in Afghanistan, as does the Afghan government," Gates said. "By the same token, the Taliban do not hold any land," and lose every real engagement with NATO or U.S. forces. "So the notion that things are out of control in Afghanistan or that we're sliding toward a disaster, I think, is far too pessimistic."

President Hamid Karzai, Afghanistan's U.S.-backed leader, has said he intends to run again. Registration has begun but is spotty, and the Taliban is expected try to disrupt registration and voting.

Gates, speaking alongside leaders from other nations with significant fighting forces in Afghanistan's heavily contested south, said the United States has not made exact decisions about the timing of additional brigades beyond one planned for January.

Philippine leader heads to summit

TOKYO (AP)—Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo departed Saturday for Los Angeles from Osaka, where her plane made an emergency landing in Japan the previous day after her husband fell ill on board, according to media reports.

Arroyo was on her way from Manila to attend the 21-nation Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Lima, Peru.

The plane landed at Kansai International Airport in western Japan, an airport police official said Friday on condition of anonymity, citing department policy.

Arroyo's husband, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, was rushed to a nearby hospital for emergency treatment for an illness related to a chronic health problem, the police official said. Arroyo's husband underwent heart surgery in 2007.

Arroyo spent the night at the medical facility, where her husband remains for treatment, Kyodo news agency said.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Suspected US missile strike kills 5 in Pakistan

MIRAN SHAH, Pakistan (AP)—Intelligence officials say a suspected U.S. missile strike has killed at least five militants in northwestern Pakistan. Saturday's strike was in Ali Khel, a town in North Waziristan's tribal area. It comes days after Pakistan lodged a protest with the U.S. ambassador against a missile attack deep inside its territory on Wednesday. Two intelligence officials say the latest attack hit the home of a local commander, where foreigners were also staying. The officials who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media said they got this information from their agents. Pakistan is an ally of the United States in its war on terror, but it opposes such attacks in its tribal regions.

Myanmar court hands comedian 45-year prison term

YANGON, Myanmar (AP)—Myanmar's courts continued a crackdown on activists Friday, handing out a 45-year prison sentence to a comedian who went to the delta to help cyclone victims and criticized the junta's slow relief response. Comedian and activist Zarganar, whose birth name is Maung Thura, was among at least 100 people to receive sentences of two to 65 years since early November. Many of the trials were held in closed sessions, sometimes without defense lawyers or family present. The military government's wave of harsh sentences has been condemned worldwide by Western governments and human rights groups. They contend that the sentences make a mockery of the ruling junta's professed plan to restore democracy with a 2010 election. The government holds more than 2,100 political prisoners, up sharply from nearly 1,200 in June 2007—before last year's pro-democracy demonstrations, according to international human rights groups.

Grenade wounds 8 outside Thai PM office

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP)—A grenade attack on anti-government protesters occupying the Thai prime minister's office wounded eight people early Saturday, officials said. Police Lt. Col. Samreng Songsiang said he inspected the scene and the explosion was from an M-79 grenade. The protesters have occupied the Government House compound since August. They say they will not leave until Prime Minister Somchai Wongsawat resigns or is overthrown. The protest movement has been the focus of several small bomb and grenade attacks, including one last Thursday that killed one person and wounded more than 20. Saturday's explosion occurred shortly after 2 a.m. outside the government house compound where guards appointed by the protesters man checkpoints. Samreng said the grenade was fired from somewhere nearby but could not pinpoint the location or suggest who would have fired it.

Malaysia Islamic body bans yoga for Muslims

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—Malaysia's top Islamic body has ruled against Muslims practicing yoga. In its non-binding edict, Malaysia's National Fatwa Council says yoga has elements of Hindu religion that could corrupt Muslims. Council chairman Abdul Shukor Husin says yoga involves not just physical exercise but also includes spiritual elements. Though the council's decisions are not legally binding on Malaysia's Muslim population, many nevertheless abide by the rulings.

World

Congo refugees suffer shooting, rape, looting

KIBATI, Congo (AP)—Looting soldiers tried to rape one woman and fatally shot another at a refugee camp, witnesses said Friday, as the United Nations prepared to send more peacekeepers to help protect traumatized civilians in eastern Congo.

But Congo's president said the 3,100 additional troops proposed by the U.N. would not be enough to halt the unfolding disaster.

Some 67,000 people have overrun the village of Kibati, just north of the provincial capital of Goma. The U.N. refugee agency said Friday it was postponing plans to move refugees from the area, which is near the front line between soldiers and rebels.

"We fear that the civilian population, already in a dramatic and desperate humanitarian situation, could be caught in the crossfire should fighting resume in the area," the refugee agency's spokesman, William Spindler, said in Geneva.

Shootings, looting and rape have plagued the already desperate lives of refugees.

Tumayini Kahumba, 20, was fatally shot in the village Thursday night as she slept next to her mother and two siblings in a tent, uncle Jean-Dieu Bansi said.

AP

Internally displaced Congoleses wait for food distribution in Kibati, outside Goma, eastern Congo, Friday Nov. 21, 2008.

"When the soldiers got here, they wanted to rape a woman. She screamed a lot and the people woke up to help her. They (soldiers) began to shoot in the air to try to spread the crowd. They were also looting," Bansi said.

One gunshot pierced the tent and hit Kahumba near the ear.

Elisabeth Byrs, a spokeswoman for the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, said 20 rapes were reported in a week at a health center in Goma, the eastern provincial capital, but that probably many more go unreported.

Years of sporadic violence in eastern Congo intensified in August, when fighting heated up between the army and fighters loyal to rebel leader Laurent Nkunda. More than 250,000 refugees have been forced from homes in eastern Congo in recent weeks.

Nkunda says he is protecting Tutsis from Hutus who fled to Congo after Rwanda's 1994 genocide. But critics say he is more interested in power and accuse his forces of committing multiple human rights abuses. Congo's army and other militias also are accused of abuses.

Some fear the current crisis could once again draw in neighboring countries. Congo's devastating 1998-2002 war split the vast nation into rival fiefdoms and involved half a dozen African armies.

A 17,000-strong U.N. peacekeeping force, spread thin across this vast nation the size of Western Europe, has been unable to protect civilians or stop the fighting.

Iraqi Shiites burn Bush effigy in anti-US protest

BAGHDAD (AP)—Chanting "no to America," supporters of a radical Shiite cleric burned an effigy of President George W. Bush Friday in a protest demanding parliament scuttle a U.S.-Iraqi security pact and American troops begin withdrawing from Iraq immediately.

The demonstration drew nearly 20,000 followers of Muqtada al-Sadr to Firdous Square, the same spot where U.S. Marines toppled a statue of Saddam Hussein and exultant Iraqis pummeled it with debris in what became an iconic image of the fall of Baghdad and the end of the dictator's 23-year rule.

Friday's protest was the latest display of opposition to an accord that could push Iraq into new political turmoil even though the ruling coalition appears to have enough parliamentary votes to narrowly approve the deal.

Parliament is scheduled to vote on the pact Monday, but presidential spokesman Naseer al-Ani told Iraq's Sharqiyah television that the vote might be delayed until after the Muslim feast of Eid al-Adha, which falls in early December.

"It will need more time. Perhaps until after Eid al-Adha," he told the station. The legislature is expected to go into recess this month ahead of Eid al-Adha, when scores of lawmakers travel to Saudi Arabia for the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca.

The pact establishes a timeline for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from cities by June 30 and the entire country by 2011. It places U.S. forces under tight Iraqi control and gives the Iraqis limited powers to put American soldiers and civilian Pentagon employees on trial in cases of serious crimes committed off-base and off-duty.

Bulgarian archaeologists unearth ancient chariot

SOFIA, Bulgaria (AP)—Archaeologists have unearthed an elaborately decorated 1,800-year-old chariot sheathed in bronze at an ancient Thracian tomb in southeastern Bulgaria, the head of the excavation said Friday. "The lavishly ornamented four-wheel chariot dates back to the end of the second century A.D.," Veselin Ignatov told The Associated Press in a telephone interview from the site, near the southeastern village of Karanovo.

But he said archaeologists were struggling to keep up with looters, who often ransack ancient sites before the experts can get to them.

The bronze-plated wooden chariot is decorated with scenes from Thracian mythology, including figures of a jumping panther and the carving of a mythological animal with the body of a panther and the tail of a dolphin, Ignatov said.

He said the chariot, with wheels measuring 1.2 meters (four feet) across, was found during excavations in a funerary mound that archaeologists believe was the grave of a wealthy Thracian aristocrat, as he was buried along with his belongings.

AP

Archaeologists work around a 1,800-year-old bronze chariot at an ancient Thracian tomb near the village of Karanovo, east of the Bulgarian capital Sofia, Friday, Nov. 21, 2008.

Mexico: Ex-drug czar allegedly took cartel money

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Mexico accused its former drug czar Friday of taking $450,000 from a cartel he was supposed to destroy, going public with a scandal that deals a serious blow to the country's U.S.-backed drug war.

Noe Ramirez is the highest-ranking law enforcement official detained yet as part of Mexico's sweeping effort to weed out officials who allegedly shared police information with violent drug smugglers. The corruption scandal is the biggest to rock the Mexican government in more than a decade.

Although the arrest complicates President Felipe Calderon's nationwide crackdown on the drug trade, Attorney General Eduardo Medina said it also proved the government's commitment to rooting out corruption.

That commitment could be key to ensuring continued U.S. support for its drug fight. The U.S. Congress conditioned 15 percent of a still-to-be-released $400 million aid package on Mexico's efforts to clean up its police force.

U.S. investigators work closely with their Mexican counterparts, sharing information with those who have been closely vetted. The Drug Enforcement Administration hasn't said if it plans to pull back on cooperation, given the questions surrounding whom to trust.

But Thomas Schweich, a former U.S. deputy assistant secretary of state for international law enforcement, said the revelations suggest Mexico is aggressively dealing with its corruption problem.

"I find the whole situation encouraging. If you are a corrupt official, you are no longer immune to prosecution no matter how high up you are," said Schweich, who now works for the Bryan Cave law firm in St. Louis. "It shows a lot of political will on the part of Calderon."

In a statement, U.S. Ambassador to Mexico Tony Garza said the arrest shows "how seriously the government of Mexico is taking the challenge of rooting out narcotics-related corruption."

WORLD BRIEFS

French Socialist leader vote too close to call

PARIS (AP)—A vote tally between two women vying to head the Socialist Party and lead the opposition against France's conservative president was too close to call, a senior party official said early Saturday. Former presidential candidate Segolene Royal and Martine Aubry, the architect of the country's 35-hour work week, were neck-and-neck with nearly all votes counted, said Daniel Vaillant, a former interior minister. He did not release any figures for the balloting. "Given that the results are extremely close, I am unable, at this time, to say who will emerge as the winner," said Vaillant, speaking on behalf of the left-wing party's leadership. Voting continued in some of France's overseas territories and the handful of votes produced by these former colonial dependencies could tip the election one way or another.

Germany drops attempt to ban Scientology

POTSDAM, Germany (AP)—Germany is dropping its pursuit of a ban on Scientology after finding insufficient evidence of illegal activity, security officials said Friday. Domestic intelligence services will continue to monitor the group, officials said. The German branch of the Los Angeles-based Church of Scientology has been under observation by domestic intelligence services for more than a decade. Top security officials asked state governments in December to begin gathering information on whether they had sufficient grounds to seek a ban. The Church of Scientology welcomed the ministers' decision to stop seeking a ban as the "only one possible." "There never was a legal basis to open such proceedings," said Sabine Weber, a spokeswoman for Scientology in Germany. Scientology further called on officials to end the observation, and what it called "the discrimination and the harassment that go along with it." Germany has said it considers Scientology to be in conflict with the principles of the nation's constitution, calling it less a church than a business that uses coercion to take advantage of vulnerable people.

Focus

AP

In this image made available Wednesday Nov. 12, 2008, by Britain's Ministry of Defence, two boats from the British warship HMS Cumberland intercept a Yemeni-flagged dhow in the Gulf of Aden, Tuesday, Nov. 11, 2008.

Modern Pirates are Tough To Combat

By PETER SPIEGEL and HENRY CHU
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

LONDON—The Saudis chose to negotiate. The Indian navy opened fire. The U.S. navy said shipping companies should do more to protect their vessels, and the ship owners said governments should guard the high seas.

But everyone wants the barely functioning government of Somalia to control the pirates who sail from its ports to seize the cargo ships and tankers that ply past.

Mightily armed, but slightly baffled, 21st century civilization appears to have no collective answer to piracy, a scourge once considered banished into history.

"These are not just unskilled bandits," said Russian navy spokesman Igor Dyagalo. "Most likely we are dealing with two or even three pirate syndicates planning these attacks. They have very good sea communications, and they're well-armed."

Indian officials said Wednesday a navy ship exchanged fire with a suspected pirate vessel before blowing it up in waters off the African coast. And over the weekend, pirates took control of a Saudi oil tanker, leading to negotiations with the Saudi government.

Shipping and security officials said pirates are exploiting the maritime equivalent of what military officers on land call ungovernable spaces: vast, remote regions made lawless because of failed states, mostly out of the reach of international militaries. They find the ships fairly easy to capture, and many shipping companies willing to pay lucrative ransoms to free hijacked crews and cargo.

Like the globe's other piracy hotspot, the narrow spit of sea between Malaysia and Indonesia called the Strait of Malacca, the Gulf of Aden is one of the most sensitive chokepoints in global commerce, a passageway for an array of valuable cargo like oil, weapons, and manufactured good shuttling between Europe and Asia.

These waters are four times the size of Texas. And while the stable, comparatively wealthy East Asian countries that line the Malacca Straits have committed their naval and coastal forces to stamping out hijackings and piracy, the Gulf of Aden is bordered by poor or dysfunctional countries like Djibouti, Yemen, and particularly Somalia, home to a long-simmering civil war and a central government that barely exists.

"The area is much bigger," said RAND Corp.'s Peter Chalk, author of a recent study on piracy and terrorism at sea. "You do not have that kind of regional cooperation now, and you have a huge void of governance in Somalia. All of those factors make dealing with this problem that much more difficult."

That inability risks halting maritime activity going from the Indian Ocean into the Red Sea. Already at least one major shipper, Norwegian oil and chemical tanker operator Odfjell, has announced it is halting all transits through the Gulf of Aden by its 100-vessel fleet.

Others may soon follow. Shipping consultants have reported a skyrocketing of insurance premiums for ships passing through the vast waters between the Horn of Africa and the Arabian peninsula, with some estimating the costs rising as much as tenfold. BGN Risk, a British firm that analyzes corporate risk, said the additional costs to the shipping industry could total $400 million per year.

"The vast extension of the pirates' reach will extend the area deemed as insecure by international shipping—and more importantly by insurers," wrote London-based energy analyst Samuel Ciszuk in a report Tuesday for IHS Global Insight.

Many international shippers insist it is not their role to fight pirates.

Vladimir Mednikov, vice president of Sovcomflot, Russia's largest shipping company, said governments and the international community should secure the open seas.

"We are peaceful people. We are not in the business of war," Mednikov said. "We are carriers of oil and gas and other commodities.

AP

The MV Kapitan Maslov soon after docking at the port of Mombasa on Sunday, Nov.16, 2008. Loaded with more than eight hundred containers from Colombo in Sri Lanka, the ship, with seventeen crew members was attacked by Somali pirates 300 nautical miles off from the Somali waters. After they launched a rocket propelled grenade at the ship on November 13, which did not explode, the ship headed to Mombasa port to off-load the containers. One of the officer's rooms was completely destroyed by another projectile which exploded and burned the room.

"I take issue with this whole notion that it's incumbent upon the armed forces of the world, the navies of the world, to solve this problem," Morrell said at a Pentagon news conference Wednesday. "The shipping companies also have an obligation to secure their ships, to prevent incidents such that we've been seeing at alarming rates over the past several months."

AP

This photo released by the U.S. Navy shows a hijacked Chinese fishing vessel, FV Tian Yu 8 in the Indian Ocean off the coast of Somalia, Monday, Nov. 17, 2008. The ship was attacked Nov. 16 and forced to proceed to an anchorage off the Somali coast.

Cyrus Mody, manager of the International Maritime Bureau in London, an arm of the International Chamber of Commerce, said his organization would like to see more naval stops of so-called "mother vessels," the base ships used by pirates as jumping off points, which should then be confiscated.

But Pentagon press secretary Geoff Morrell said some of the blame must fall on the shippers themselves, who have not done enough to protect their cargo.

Pentagon officials bristled at suggestions that the U.S. and allied navies have not actively pursued the suspected Somali pirates, arguing that a NATO task force in the region and other allied naval vessels have taken aggressive action to curtail their activities.

The officials said one of the principal reasons for establishing its new Africa Command, formally inaugurated just last month, was to combat piracy both around the Horn of Africa and the similarly oil-rich Gulf of Guinea in west Africa.

The U.S. navy says intelligence officials are watching for signs of terrorist involvement in piracy.

"Wherever there is big money, you will find terrorists," said U.S. Navy Vice Adm. William E. Gortney, commander of all coalition navies in the region, though he added that the recent spate of piracy off Somalia shows no signs of links to international terrorists.

Coast Guard Capt. Phillip J. Heyl, the chief staff officer in Africom's operations division, said the U.S. is highly reliant on local governments' willingness and ability to improve their coastal defenses.

But military officials and experts also say even a stepped-up naval presence is unlikely to stop the piracy. With an estimated 20,000 ships per year passing through the gulf, U.S. and NATO officials have acknowledged that their 14 allied naval ships off the Somali coast, including those from India and Russia, are simply not enough to provide escorts to all commercial vessels.

"We're never going to get enough ships down there," Gortney said.

Military officials argue that the problem also must be addressed ashore in Somalia, where the pirates are organizing unmolested. Until then, private security companies are likely to ramp up their efforts to fill in the gaps.

Jeff Gibson, vice president for international training and operations at Blackwater Worldwide, said he has had inquiries from about 60 shippers and insurance companies. "The pirates are going after soft targets," Gibson said. "If a ship is being escorted by another boat, or some small boats, or maybe even a helicopter overhead, (the pirates) are going to decide: Let's not make the effort."

Such practices run up against U.N. guidelines for operating commercial ships, however, and critics argue that armed guards on board—which are not always visible to attacking pirates—may lead to needless bloodshed without deterring potential attackers.

The U.N.'s International Maritime Organization distributed new guidance after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks strongly discouraging any arming of commercial crews, saying such a move risks "escalating an already dangerous situation."

Spiegel reported from Washington and Chu from London. Times staff writers Ron White in Long Beach, Calif., Megan K. Stack in Moscow and Julian E. Barnes in Washington contributed to this report.

Life & Style

Hark! Colbert sings in new Christmas special

NEW YORK (AP)—The permanently suit-clad Stephen Colbert has traded in his pinstripes for a cardigan sweater, red turtleneck and furry boots.

Following the tradition of Andy Williams and Bing Crosby, Colbert hosts his own holiday special in "A Colbert Christmas: The Greatest Gift of All." The hour-long special airs Sunday at 10 p.m. EST on Comedy Central, and will on Tuesday be released as a DVD, complete with a Yule log of burning books.

Clearly in the Christmas spirit, at the first mention of old holiday specials, Colbert launches into renditions of Williams' "Little Altar Boy" and Crosby and David Bowie's "Little Drummer Boy."

The latter was the inspiration for a duet between Colbert and Willie Nelson, who appears—in one of the more bizarre numbers—as a tiny wise man in a miniature nativity scene.

"This is just some good fun to watch during your eggnog-induced dementia," Colbert joked in an interview Wednesday.

The special finds Colbert far from his "Colbert Report" set in an obviously made-for-TV room of a mountain cabin dressed for Christmas. Hanging by the fireplace are two stockings, one labeled "Stephen," the other "Colbert."

While he's snowed in and a bear lurks outside, Colbert is visited by Nelson, Toby Keith, Jon Stewart, John Legend, Feist and Elvis Costello to sing Christmas songs that were penned by "Daily Show" executive producer David Javerbaum and composed by Adam Schlesinger.

"I had a clear, clear command to everyone involved: 'No cynicism,'" said Colbert. "We're not mocking Christmas specials. We're doing MY Christmas special. And that was the aesthetic we tried to bring into it. Like, we're really doing this. I want people to see this every year."

The special was originally planned for last Christmas but was delayed a year when Colbert became swamped during his brief run for president in the South Carolina primary. Instead, the special was taped mostly over a three-week period in August.

AP

In this image released by Comedy Central, Stephen Colbert, host of Comedy Central's "The Colbert Report," is shown during his one-hour musical holiday special, "A Colbert Christmas: The Greatest Gift of All," airing Sunday, Nov. 23, 2008, at 10:00 p.m. EDT on Comedy Central.

The 44-year-old comedian, who lives in New Jersey with his wife and three children, is a practicing Catholic who has taught Sunday school at his church. The special concludes on a positive note, with Colbert and Costello singing that "there are much worse things" than believing in Christmas.

ON THE NET
http://www.colbertnation.com/home
http://feedingamerica.org/

Costume pieces from the special are being auctioned to benefit Feeding America, and a percentage of the DVD proceeds will also go to the charity.

Conservative pundits, of course, were the basis of Colbert's character—and there is some allusion to the "war on Christmas" that various commentators have waged in recent years.

But while Colbert still remains in character, the special is ultimately mostly free of politics. During the nonstop campaign, Colbert looked forward to the special like a "gift box," completely removed from the election.

"See, no politics," said Colbert proudly, as if proving his versatility.

Though fodder from the campaign was a boon to "The Report," Colbert says he feels greater freedom now that the election is over.

"I've actually had a better time than I've had in a long time," he said about the last few weeks. "I was strapped to someone else's galloping horse. There was no escaping how fast the news was changing. We were completely in a responsive comedy."

But there is nothing reactive about the unique "A Colbert Christmas."

"I'm so proud that we made something that is sincerely strange," said Colbert, "but also strangely sincere."

Looking 'Fabulous'

By DENISE MARTIN
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

HOLLYWOOD—In the pursuit of perfection, "America's Next Top Model" coaches Jay Manuel and J. Alexander have cut many girls down to size. "I'm seeing a carcass on a fence," Manuel, the show's creative director, once told a contestant while she posed during a photo shoot. Runway trainer Alexander doesn't sugarcoat his words either: "Your walk is as useless as a flashlight with no batteries in it in the dark."

The girls competing to win a modeling contract don't mind the critiques, however catty they may be. Manuel and Alexander seem like the gay best friends they always wanted: stylish, opinionated and happy to coif the contestants until they're stunning. In truth, Tyra Banks' sassy sidekicks, affectionately known to fans as Mr. and Miss J, are the unlikely heroes of "Top Model," keeping viewers laughing, models in line and ratings high for 11 editions and counting. (The reality show, whose season finale airs Wednesday night, trails only "Smallville" as the CW's most-watched program.)

So if Banks, the series' executive producer and host, wants them to greet the girls looking like frosted-haired members of the Starship Enterprise, as they did during this season's premiere, they say all the better. Manuel and Alexander have, after all, been indulging her every wacky whim for the last five years, and now the pair are getting a chance to star in their own show, "Operation Fabulous," described as a cross between "Top Model" and "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition."

"At the start of Cycle 7, which kicked off with a prep school theme, she had me go from marching band member to schoolgirl to prom queen in one episode," said Alexander, who often appears on the show in drag. "That was a long day, and I had to go to a surprise Bat Mitzvah afterward too."

"You'll never see us boring," Manuel agreed.

The two were taking a break from filming "Operation Fabulous," which, if it is picked up by the CW, will follow them as they ride into small towns across the country to advise everyday girls on how to work it in the real world. As the sun set on Descanso Gardens in Glendale, Manuel and Alexander were eagerly awaiting to see what the female participants had selected for their final looks—a test to determine what they'd learned from the infamous Mr. and Miss J.

The feel-good nature of the project is a slight change of pace from the snark of "Top Model," but CW President of Entertainment Dawn Ostroff says behind the shtick are two guys who are always rooting for women. "Jay is your parent in tough love. He tells you the way it is, but only because he wants you to be the best you can be," she said. "As much as Miss J criticizes and rolls his eyes, deep down, he's just looking for the girl who can get it done."

Both men began separate careers in fashion long before being recruited by Banks for "Top Model"—Manuel as a make-up artist and Alexander as a model-turned-runway walk instructor. On "Operation Fabulous," the pair would do for the Plain Jane what "Queer Eye" did for the Straight Guy.

"On 'Top Model' they're competing for a demanding job, so we have to crack the whip," Manuel said. "But we like working with real women too. We want them to feel good about themselves. We aren't giving them 'makeovers' on 'Operation Fabulous.' I actually hate the word 'makeover.' We're teaching them to enhance and maintain what they've already got."

Before their current careers, Manuel was pre-med and studied opera singing, going so far as to work with New York's Metropolitan Opera for a time; Alexander thought he would follow in his older sister's footsteps into an accounting job, though his father knew better.

"He used to say, 'I wish I had a lot of money, I'd put you on television,'" Alexander recalled. "Accounting. Ha!" The South Bronx native (born Alexander Jenkins) was plucked from obscurity to model for Jean Paul Gaultier, which led to jobs in Tokyo and then France, where he now resides speaking fluent French.

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

'Spamalot' moves up its Broadway closing

NEW YORK (AP)—Some Broadway shows can't wait to say goodbye. "Monty Python's Spamalot" will now close Jan. 11—a week earlier than the musical an ounced last month. The Mike Nichols-directed adaptation of "Monty Python and the Holy Grail" has grossed more than $175 million in New York since opening in March 2005 at the Shubert Theatre. It has been seen by more than 2 million people. And the Shubert already has a new tenant: a revival of Noel Coward's "Blithe Spirit," starring Rupert Everett, Christine Ebersole, Jayne Atkinson and Angela Lansbury. It begins performances Feb. 26, with an opening date to be set.

Road detour for Depp movie shoot costs county

MADISON, Wis. (AP)—County officials in Wisconsin are holding the bag following a movie shoot involving Johnny Depp as famed bank robber John Dillinger. During filming of "Public Enemies"—Wisconsin's first film under the governor's new movie incentives—state highway traffic was diverted away from the center of Columbus, 70 miles northwest of Milwaukee. The detour road couldn't stand the load—and collapsed. Dodge County was left with a $116,000 repair. It's filed a claim against the city of Columbus that could lead to a lawsuit. But Columbus Mayor Nancy Osterhaus says talks are ongoing between the city, county and film studio NBC Universal, with hopes that they might split the bill for the March mishap. "Public Enemies" is out July 2.

Man charged with hitting 'Stargate' actor

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Authorities have charged a man with assault for allegedly striking "Stargate Atlantis" actor Jason Momoa in the face with a beer glass, causing wounds that required 140 stitches. Los Angeles County prosecutors on Friday announced a felony assault with a deadly weapon charge had been filed against 21-year-old Dominic Bando. He's accused of attacking Momoa at a Hollywood restaurant Nov. 15. Jail records show Bando was arrested and released that day by Los Angeles police. Records do not indicate whether he had an attorney. Prosecutors said in a news release that Momoa required reconstructive surgery to repair his injuries. Momoa plays Ronon Dex on "Stargate Atlantis" and has a daughter with girlfriend Lisa Bonet.

'13' set to close; 'American Buffalo' is undecided

NEW YORK (AP)—"13," a tween tale of growing up and trying to fit in, is the latest casualty of the Broadway season. The show, which features a score by Jason Robert Brown, will end its Broadway run Jan. 4 after 105 performances, producer Bob Boyett announced Friday. The show opened in October to mixed reviews and has been struggling to find an audience. Also struggling at the box office is "American Buffalo," the revival of the David Mamet play starring John Leguizamo, Cedric the Entertainer and Haley Joel Osment. The production opened Nov. 17 to largely negative notices. The producing team will decide Monday if the engagement will continue, spokesman Richard Kornberg said.

Punk musician Barker sues over SC plane crash

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Punk musician Travis Barker on Friday sued companies linked to a plane that crashed in South Carolina, injuring him and killing two friends.

The former Blink-182 drummer sued the plane's owners, Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co., and an airplane maintenance company, seeking more than $25,000 in damages.

Barker's suit claims the companies improperly operated and maintained the Learjet that overshot a runway and burst into flames on Sept. 19.

The crash killed two pilots, Barker's assistant, Chris Baker, and Barker's bodyguard, Charles Monroe Still Jr.

Barker is seeking damages for pain and suffering, disfigurement, loss of earnings, and medical and legal expenses.

AP

This Nov. 17, 2006 file photo shows Travis Barker as he appears onstage during MTV's "Total Request Live" at the MTV Times Square Studios, in New York.

Still's mother, Thelma Martin Still, joined Barker in the lawsuit and is suing the companies for damages including grief and sorrow, funeral expenses and loss of earnings.

Barker and celebrity disc jockey DJ AM were both injured in the crash. The pair had performed together the night of the crash and were flying back to Los Angeles.

The lawsuit alleges that the Learjet was "defective" and faults the plane's pilots, claiming they were improperly trained and should have tried to take off rather than continue down the runway. The jet was owned by Global Exec Aviation, a Long Beach, Calif.-based charter company.

Along with Global Exec, others named in the lawsuit are Goodyear; Toronto-based Bombardier Inc., which the suit claims was responsible for maintaining the aircraft; and two charter firms that brokered the flight, Clay Lacy Aviation Inc. and Inter Travel and Services Inc.

Messages left for Global Exec Aviation, Bombardier and Goodyear were not returned Friday. A person at Clay Lacy said it was not the company's plane, and contact information could not be found for Inter Travel.

Aviation authorities have said cockpit recordings indicated the jet's crew thought a tire had blown during takeoff. National Transportation Safety Board officials have said pieces of tire were recovered about 2,800 feet from where the plane started its takeoff down the 8,600-foot runway.

An NTSB report on the crash has not been finalized.

Baby-name experts grade 'Bronx Mowgli'

By ERIN CARLSON
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

The name Brooklyn has been done before, so Ashlee Simpson-Wentz and Pete Wentz turned to another New York City borough in naming their newborn son: The Bronx.

She hails from Texas, he grew up near Chicago, and the pop-rock power couple haven't said whether the Yankees' territory (and arguably the toughest real estate in New York City) inspired their unusual choice: Bronx Mowgli Wentz.

That ranks right up there with Zuma Nesta Rock - Gwen Stefani's baby boy - in the category of quirkiest baby names.

The Associated Press consulted its panel of baby-name gurus to weigh in on the scrappy-sounding moniker.

■ ■ ■

EXPERT: Whitney Walker, co-author with Eric Reyes of "The Perfect Baby Name" and consultant through ThePerfectBabyName.com.

SPECIALTY: Phonetics and rhythm—how names sound and flow together.

IMPRESSIONS: "I actually like the name Bronx. ... It is kind of a poser move to name your kid after this particular neighborhood that's seen as being a tough New York neighborhood. But if they have some connection to it, then that's nice."

"That `x' ending and the short `o' sound—those are things that are going to be appealing to people, so it's not surprising that Bronx is a choice. ... It sound tough, and hopefully the kid will be a little bit tough, and he probably will with Pete Wentz as a father, because Pete Wentz comes across certainly as a prankster. ... Bronx isn't the name for some nerdy, shy kid, you know?"

"Mowgli is a character (from the Rudyard Kipling stories and the Disney film `The Jungle Book') who's got a lot of independence, and he's brave and he saves the day, and I think there's a great tradition of naming your kids after a fictional character ... that represents an ideal that you want to impart to your kid."

"The reason that I'm giving it a minus is because Bronx ends with an `s' sound and Wentz ends with an `s' sound, and to have two one-syllable names in a row like that (both) ending with the same sound? It's almost like it's rhyming. It's a little bit too repetitive."

AP

In this Wednesday, Jan. 30, 2008 file photo, singer Ashlee Simpson and boyfriend rocker Pete Wentz arrive at Myst night club, where Simpson was to perform, in Scottsdale, Ariz.

GRADE: B-

■ ■ ■

EXPERT: Maryanna Korwitts, author of "Name Power 101" and founder of BabyNamingCentral.com.

SPECIALTY: The holistic approach, from sounds and meanings to the impact of names, possible nicknames—even initials—on personality traits.

IMPRESSIONS: "With Bronx, it's got some positives: It's short, not a name that's going to be shortened with a crazy nickname, so it is what it is. It does have a very masculine sound. There's a lot of appeal to x's and z's in names for some reason for people, and so that's another positive in the way that the name looks. It's got a nice, hard sound in the beginning—and easy to spell."

"Subliminally, it's a name that's gonna encourage this child to be very independent, very headstrong. ... He's going to have a stubborn streak and really want to do things his way, which will help him growing up in a celebrity family."

"This is a child that's going to grow up using his physical traits and talents, so he would be the kind that you talk to him the wrong way, he might throw a punch. Or he might turn his sights to sports."

"One of the things that I always caution my clients on is to choose a middle name that a child is not going to be embarrassed by later on, and this is one that could definitely be one of those that's hidden. `What's your middle name?' `Oh, I don't have one.' ... That's kind of a downer, and I think when choose a name like that, they're picking it more on the basis of their own likes and dislikes and not really thinking about the child going forward."

"Bronx Wentz? Little problem in the flow there in saying the name. ... We've got some problems in that Bronx and Wentz are both one syllable, and it's a very herky-jerky type of thing when you're saying it."

GRADE: C

■ ■ ■

EXPERT: Jennifer Moss, author of "The One-in-a-Million Baby Name Book" and founder of Babynames.com.

SPECIALTY: Practicality. Moss focuses on the research process, looking for influences such as family history and life experiences.

IMPRESSIONS: "The sound of it—Bronx Wentz—is really a harsh sound. And the name Bronx itself sounds like a honk, you know? ... It associates with a certain place - not that there's anything wrong with the Bronx, but it's, like, why? ... I mean, I don't know, it's just like naming somebody Detroit."

GRADE: D+

■ ■ ■

COMPOSITE PANEL GRADE: C

■ ■ ■

PREVIOUS PANEL RESULTS:

■ Knox Leon and Vivienne Marcheline, twins of Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt: Knox Leon: C, Vivienne Marcheline: B-plus.

■ Zuma Nesta Rock, son of Gavin Rossdale and Gwen Stefani: C-

AP

Rapper T.I., whose real name is Clifford Harris, of Atlanta, testifies in Hamilton County Common Pleas Court, Friday, Nov. 21, 2008, in Cincinnati.

Rapper T.I. testifies in Ohio murder trial

CINCINNATI (AP)—Rapper T.I. testified Friday that he believes the bullets fired at his entourage during a wild vehicle chase two years ago were meant for him.

He took the witness stand in the trial of Hosea Thomas, 34, who is accused of firing the shot that killed Philant Johnson during a gun battle on Interstate 75.

"All of those rounds were fired for me, in my opinion," he said, adding that he later apologized to Johnson's mother when he called her with the news.

Testifying for the prosecution, T.I. described seeing Johnson, whom he called his best and oldest friend, after their van pulled over. He said Johnson was lying lifeless, blood running down his face from a shot into his left temple.

Johnson was an assistant to T.I., whose real name is Clifford Harris.

T.I., 28, said he and Johnson had grown up together in Atlanta and their families were close friends.

The shooting occurred after a post-concert party at a club. T.I. said after his van drove away, he spotted another vehicle that seemed to be trying to move up alongside the van.

"Before I knew it, shots rang out," said T.I, acknowledging that someone returned fire from his van as he took cover. He didn't identify any shooters.

T.I. wasn't harmed, but three others were injured. T.I. testified that he received no response when he called out Johnson's name.

He said that after calling Johnson's mother, he talked to Johnson's young daughter, whom he said was 4 or 5 years old.

"I told her that he was gone to a better place and he won't be coming back. And I told her how much he loved her," he said.

T.I. spoke calmly and directly for a little over a half hour on the stand in a packed, small courtroom in the Hamilton County courthouse.

Prosecutors say Thomas' brother has identified him as the shooter. Padron Thomas was driving a Jeep that allegedly chased the vans used by T.I. and his entourage on May 3, 2006.

Hosea Thomas' attorney said Padron Thomas is testifying against his brother to earn a lesser sentence on federal charges.

T.I. has had his own legal problems. He was sentenced to one year in prison on federal weapons charges after his arrest in October 2007 before the BET Hip-Hop Awards in Atlanta for allegedly trying to buy automatic weapons. He is to start his sentence in March after completing 1,000 hours of community service.

Parole board KO's Lohan's NY charity boxing match

NEW YORK (AP)—Michael Lohan is going to have to be patient if he's still looking for a fight.

The father of Lindsay Lohan took bids last month for the chance to box against him Monday on Long Island, all to raise money for charity. The president of a business computing firm put in a winning bid of $30,000—until parole officials stepped in.

Spokeswoman Heather Groll says the board frowns on Lohan's participation in a boxing match because he spent 20 months in prison for attempted assault.

Lohan tells the Daily News he is "very disappointed" but understands the decision.

The parole board says Lohan is free to engage in whatever charity events he wants after his parole ends in February.

Spears makes unexpected appearance in court

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Britney Spears made another cameo in the midst of her comeback—this time at a Los Angeles courtroom.

Spears appeared unexpectedly Friday for a hearing in her ongoing conservatorship. A court spokesman said after the hearing that Spears appeared to give an update on her upcoming album, "Circus," and details of her tour and other promotions.

Her father, Jamie Spears, has had control over his 26-year-old daughter's personal and financial affairs since February. The court made the arrangement permanent last month, but Spears can petition to end the arrangement.

The court spokesman says she did not make that request Friday.

As part of that deal, her father and attorney gained greater control over her professional career.

Jamie Spears appeared in court with his daughter and emerged from a courtroom with her after a two-hour closed session.

Spears has not appeared in court during months of conservatorship proceedings, but has been represented by a court-appointed attorney.

Spears' new album is scheduled to be released on Dec. 2, which is also the singer's 27th birthday.

AP

In this Sept. 26, 2007 file photo, Rapper Kanye West arrives at the "Us Weekly Hot Hollywood 2007" party in Los Angeles.

Kanye West's new album to debut on MySpace Music

ON THE NET:

http://www.myspacemusic.com

NEW YORK (AP)—Add Kanye West to the list of artists previewing their new CDs on MySpace Music.

The 31-year-old rapper's "808s & Heartbreak" doesn't come out until Monday, but fans have been able to hear the entire CD starting Friday.

West is the latest act to debut a CD on MySpace before its official release. Guns 'N Roses, Paul McCartney and Beyonce have all done the same. The Killers will do so on Saturday with their CD, "Day & Age."

It has become a regular practice to offer some kind of live stream of new CDs in the days before their release on one Web site.

AP

In this Nov. 6, 2008, file photo, Britney Spears performs during Madonna's Sticky and Sweet tour at Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles.

Newman's will includes wife, foundation; cars sold

WESTPORT, Conn. (AP)—Paul Newman has left the assets to his wife, the Oscars to his foundation and the race cars to the highest bidder.

A will made public this week shows that Newman, who died in September, left his personal property, including real estate, to Joanne Woodward.

The 10-time Academy Award nominee, who won one Oscar and took home two honorary ones, left those statues and other awards to the Newman's Own Foundation. Interest in Newman's Own and Salad King also went to the foundation, which will distribute all profits to charity.

The will also directed that his airplane and race cars be sold, with proceeds going to his estate.

Signed April 11, Newman's will was filed in Connecticut and was first reported by radaronline.com.

Maguire, Meyer expecting baby No. 2

NEWYORK (AP)—Spider-Man has another baby on the way.

Kelly Bush, publicist for "Spider-Man" star Tobey Maguire, says the 33-year-old actor and his wife, Jennifer Meyer, are expecting their second child in the spring.

Maguire and Meyer were married last year. They have a 2-year-old daughter, Ruby.

Meyer is the daughter of Ron Meyer, president and chief operating officer of Universal Studios.

Maguire's screen credits also include "Seabiscuit" and "Wonder Boys."

In this Aug. 8, 2007 file photo actor Tobey Maguire, right, and his wife Jennifer Meyer arrive at the premiere of "The 11th Hour" in Los Angeles.

AP

FCC appeals Janet Jackson case to Supreme Court

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—The Federal Communications Commission has asked the U.S. Supreme Court to review the indecency case over Janet Jackson's breast-baring performance at the 2004 Super Bowl.

The FCC this week appealed a ruling by the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia, saying that court was wrong to throw out the case and a $550,000 fine against CBS Corp. in July.

The appellate court cited the FCC practice of not considering objectionable images indecent if they are "fleeting."

In Jackson's halftime show at the 2004 Super Bowl, which spawned the case, she briefly flashed a breast as she performed with Justin Timberlake.

The FCC said the court incorrectly applied a rule—since changed—regarding expletives that required a profanity be repeated before it is deemed indecent. The FCC contends the rule didn't apply to images.

Reaction to the appeal was swift from the Media Access Project, which filed a friend-of-the-court brief with the appellate court on behalf of a group of TV writers, directors and producers.

"The impact of the FCC's decision on the creative process is very profound," said the group's chief executive, Andrew Jay Schwartzman. "The FCC's decisions in this area have made it very difficult for creative artists to exercise their craft."

At the time, broadcasters did not employ a video delay for live events, a practice that changed within a week of the game.

The FCC also has an appeal pending before the U.S. Supreme Court in a New York case involving profanity uttered by Cher during a December 2002 music awards show and by Nicole Richie during a December 2003 awards show, both carried on Fox stations.

AP

In this Sunday Feb. 1, 2004 file picture, Justin Timberlake reaches across Janet Jackson during their performance just before he pulled off the covering to her right breast, which was partially obscured by a sun-shaped, metal nipple decoration during the half time performance at Super Bowl XXXVIII in Houston.

Learning to turn down dates is a critical lesson for girls

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DearAbby

DEAR ABBY: I would like to encourage all parents of daughters to teach their girls how to say "no" clearly and with grace.

My teenage son asked a girl to the homecoming dance recently. She said, "Oh, I'll have to think about it. I don't know whether I want to go or not." She may have thought she was sparing my son's feelings, but it left him in limbo. He figures she doesn't want to go, which is OK, but he can't ask anyone else because she hasn't said yes or no.

My son's question should have been answered with, "Yes," or "No, thank you," or "I'll have to check. I'll let you know by Monday."

Abby, learning to say no is an important skill all women should have throughout their lives. It's imperative to know that if we mean "no" we shouldn't say "maybe." Likewise, hearing a "no" is something young men need to learn how to deal with as well.

Being able to say no to a boy who asks for a date may seem small, but it may make saying no later to something major that much easier.

NICELY NEGATIVE IN BURLINGTON, N.J.

DEAR NICELY NEGATIVE: Amen! Learning to say no clearly and concisely is, indeed, an important skill for young women to have. It is the inability to be direct that sometimes gets them into serious trouble, and it is in school that young people develop their social skills.

If a girl is so eager to please that she doesn't know how to say, "Don't call me" or, "Thank you, but I'm not interested," then how is she going to learn to say, "Do not touch me in that way"?

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I turned 21 two months ago. I'm not usually one to get all excited about my "special day," but my boyfriend, "Skip," insisted on making a big deal out of it.

When the day arrived, we agreed to use a gift certificate my brother had given us to use as a "thank you" for something else. I didn't mind. But when the waiter brought the check for the remainder of the cost of the dinner, Skip "realized" he had "forgotten" his wallet, so I had to pay.

When we got home, Skip said he was going to pick up a friend to join us for cake. After two hours waiting for him to return, I finally called him to come back. To top it off, he didn't even give me a birthday card because he is saving up to buy a car.

I know birthdays aren't about material things, but about being around people you love. But Skip built up my expectations then totally shot me down. Am I wrong for still feeling hurt?

DEPRESSED IN ALTADENA, CALIF.

DEAR DEPRESSED: No. Now that you are older, it's time for you to become wiser. Your boyfriend is stingy, selfish and insensitive. He did, however, give you a priceless, intangible birthday gift—a glimpse into what your future will be like if you continue the relationship.

Be smart and read the handwriting on the wall. It's telling you to skip Skip and jump back into the dating pool.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

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Classified Ads

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REFUNDS

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Knicks set themselves up for 2010 with 2 deals

NEW YORK (AP)—The New York Knicks traded Zach Randolph and Jamal Crawford in separate deals Friday, parting with their two top scorers to free up coveted salary-cap space for the summer of 2010. Crawford was sent to Golden State for forward Al Harrington. Hours later, Randolph was shipped to the Los Angeles Clippers along with reserve guard Mardy Collins for Cuttino Mobley and Tim Thomas.

The Knicks gave up 40 points per game for a chance to cash in on something much bigger.

Knicks president Donnie Walsh has repeatedly said his goal was to get under the cap in time for a potentially sensational free-agent crop that could be headlined by LeBron James, Dwyane Wade and Chris Bosh.

"I think that opening up cap space down the road for us is a big plus on our side and I hope our fans understand that that can give us an opportunity to make the team better according to the plan that I've outlined," Walsh said on a conference call. "So I'm trying to be true to what I said from day one, and that's what I'm doing."

Both Randolph and Crawford have deals that extend past 2010. Randolph is scheduled to make $17.3 million and Crawford $10.1 million in 2010-11. None of the players the Knicks brought back are under contract past 2010.

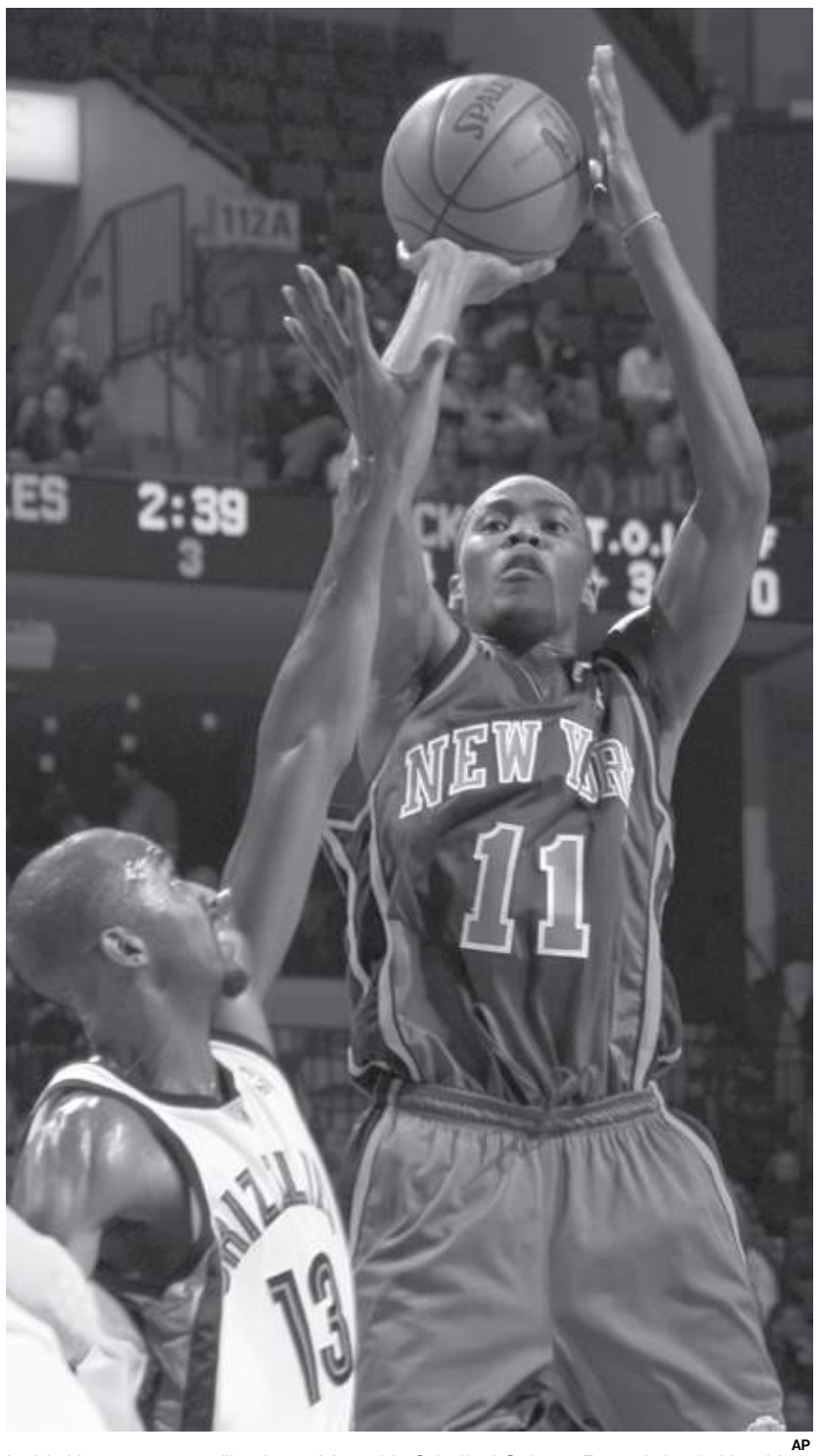
James, Wade and Bosh, all members of the U.S. Olympic team, could become free agents that summer. However, coach Mike D'Antoni said the Knicks are still focused on the present.

"I do think the guys that we traded for are going to come in and be a bonus," D'Antoni said before the Knicks' game at Milwaukee. "Good veterans, and I really want to dispel the notion that OK, we did it to clear (cap space)—which we did, and obviously we have a long-term plan, and that was the plan from the very first day.

"But at the same time, we're not throwing this year away or thinking that we're not going to make the playoffs or think that we're waiting for three years from now. No. We're going to go out and develop this team and we're going to really fight hard to get into the playoffs, and I think we can."

New York has had seven straight losing seasons, and Friday's moves might clinch an eighth, which would tie a franchise record. Though Harrington could flourish in D'Antoni's uptempo system and Thomas played well for him in Phoenix, the Knicks have to replace the 20.5 points and 12.5 rebounds Randolph was averaging, plus Crawford's 19.6 points per game.

"I think this is an unfortunate time to make this kind of trade because you're introducing three new players into the system and in addition to that you're taking out the two guys who are our most successful players in the beginning of the season in Zach and in Jamal," Walsh said. "So this will be a difficult time for our coach, but I think we we're all on the same page as far as trying to get this done."



AP

In this Nov. 12, 2008, file photo, Memphis Grizzlies' Quinton Ross defends New York Knicks Jamal Crawford (11) as he shoots a three point shot in the third quarter of an NBA basketball game in Memphis, Tenn.

Brand sinks 15-footer as 76ers edge old team Clippers

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Elton Brand hit a 15-footer with 57 seconds left and finished with 17 points in his first game against Los Angeles, leading the Philadelphia 76ers to an 89-88 victory over the short-handed Clippers on Friday night.

The Clippers lost shortly after acquiring forward Zach Randolph and guard Mardy Collins from the New York Knicks for Cuttino Mobley and Tim Thomas.

Brand played his first game against the Clippers since signing a five-year deal worth around $80 million in July.

Lakers 104, Nuggets 90

At Los Angeles, Kobe Bryant scored 11 of his 29 points in the third quarter before sitting out the fourth and Andrew Bynum finished with 13 points and 13 rebounds.

The defending Western Conference champion Lakers (10-1) are off to their best start through 11 games since the 2001-02 championship season, when they won 16 of their first 17. All of their victories have been decided by seven or more points—which was their winning margin against four teams.

Nene led the way for Denver with 18 points. Chauncey Billups made his first three shots, but was 3-for-9 the rest of the way and finished with 15 points and nine assists before going to the bench with 10:39 remaining.

Bulls 115, Warriors 110

At Oakland, Calif., Larry Hughes made five 3-pointers and finished with 26 points, and Chicago rookie Derrick Rose scored 23 of his 25 points in the second half.

Drew Gooden had 18 points and 16 rebounds for the Bulls, who won for the first time on their brutal seven-game trip stretching from Los Angeles to Philadelphia.

Hughes, a longtime Warriors guard, and Oakland native Gooden kept Chicago in a fast-paced game until Rose took charge of the final minutes, scoring 11 points in the fourth quarter before leaving with an injury with 1:13 to play.

Trail Blazers 117, Kings 96

At Sacramento, Calif., Steve Blake made six 3-pointers and scored 20 points, and Portland pulled away in the third quarter.

After shooting 59 percent in the opening half, the Blazers scored the final 10 points of the third quarter to open a 94-69 lead that was never cut below 20 in the fourth.

LaMarcus Aldridge scored 19 points for the Blazers, who made 14 of 26 3-point attempts. Brandon Roy scored 16 points, Bo Outlaw had 15, Rudy Fernandez added 14 and Joel Przybilla contributed 10 points and 10 rebounds.

Rookie Jason Thompson had 19 points and 11 rebounds for the Kings, who have lost three of four. Brad Miller scored 16 points, Spencer Hawes had 15 and Bobby Brown added 13 points and seven assists.

Bucks 104, Knicks 87

At Milwaukee, Charlie Villanueva tied a season high with 20 points in his return from injury.

Chris Duhon scored a season-high 20 for the Knicks, who dressed the league-minimum eight players after trading away three players in a pair of deals earlier Friday. Out the door were New York's top two scorers, Zach Randolph and Jamal Crawford, along with guard Mardy Collins.

Milwaukee's Andrew Bogut had 14 points and 17 rebounds. Rookie Luc Richard Mbah a Moute added eight points and 13 rebounds—including 10 in the first quarter—for the Bucks, who broke a three-game losing streak.

And despite being so short-handed, the Knicks still didn't play Stephon Marbury—which Knicks coach Mike D'Antoni said after the game was Marbury's decision.

Nets 129, Raptors 127, OT

At Toronto, Vince Carter scored 39 points against his former team, Devin Harris added 30 and New Jersey rallied from an 18-point, third-quarter deficit to beat Toronto.

Carter sent the game to overtime by draining a 3-pointer with 0.8 seconds remaining in regulation, capping a stretch that saw him score 12 consecutive points for the Nets.

The Raptors lost forward Jermaine O'Neal to a strained his left knee when he was pulled down on a flagrant foul by New Jersey's Sean Williams with 11:37 left in the fourth.

Mavericks 91, Grizzlies 76

At Dallas, Dirk Nowitzki had 25 points and 10 rebounds, Jason Kidd had 18 points and 13 rebounds, and Dallas got its first home victory of the season.

Jason Terry added 20 points for the Mavericks, returning from a 3-0 road trip.

Dallas had been 0-4 at home, losing to playoff contenders Houston, Cleveland, the Los Angeles Lakers and Orlando before getting on track against Memphis.

O.J. Mayo scored 19 points, and Mike Conley and Rudy Gay added 14 apiece for the Grizzlies, who've lost 12 straight to the Mavericks and are 7-45 all-time against Dallas.

Rockets 103, Wizards 91

At Washington, Tracy McGrady scored 14 of his 20 points in the fourth quarter, Yao Ming added 18 to win a battle of awesome wingspans, and Houston added to Washington's misery.

Carl Landry scored 19 points, and Aaron Brooks had 18 for the Rockets, who opened a three-game East Coast trip with their seventh straight win against Washington.

Antawn Jamison scored a season-high 27 points and grabbed 10 rebounds for the Wizards, whose 1-9 record is the franchise's worst start since the 1966 Baltimore Bullets opened 1-10. Andray Blatche had a season-high 14 points, and Caron Butler added 12. Washington shot just 3-for-15 from 3-point range.

Magic 100, Pacers 98, OT

At Indianapolis, Dwight Howard had 24 points, 17 rebounds and five blocks, and Orlando beat Indiana in overtime.

Howard blocked a potential game-winning shot at the end of regulation, then altered what would have been a game-tying shot in the closing seconds of overtime.

Rashard Lewis scored 23 points for the Magic and made what turned out to be the game-winning basket with 23 seconds left in overtime. Jameer Nelson added 22 points and nine assists in Orlando's fifth straight win.

Marquis Daniels scored 25 points, T.J. Ford had 22 and Danny Granger added 21 for the Pacers.

Spurs 119, Jazz 94

At San Antonio, Roger Mason scored 29 points and San Antonio made 15 of 25 3-pointers.

Playing without the backcourt of Tony Parker and Manu Ginobili, the Spurs still managed to hit eight of their first nine 3-point attempts.

Rookie George Hill scored a career-high 23 points for San Antonio (6-6) which has won four of its last five.

Tim Duncan added 18 points, seven rebounds and four assists in 27 minutes.

Utah (8-5) got 17 points from Ronnie Brewer and 16 from CJ Miles, but the Jazz were without forward Carlos Boozer for the first time this season after he strained his left quadriceps Wednesday against Milwaukee.

Hawks 88, Bobcats 83

At Atlanta, Joe Johnson scored 30 points, Marvin Williams added 22 and Atlanta pulled away in the closing minutes for a sloppy victory over Charlotte.

Rookie D.J. Augustin led the Bobcats with a career-best 26 points, only to miss a fallaway jumper from the baseline when Charlotte needed it most. Evans then came up with a big hoop for Atlanta, swishing an 18-foot jumper with 1:24 left.

Gerald Wallace, with 17 points, was the only other Charlotte player in double figures. The Bobcats hit only 42 percent (33 of 78) from the field.

Celtics 95, Timberwolves 78

At Minneapolis, In Kevin Garnett's first game at Target Center since being traded before last season, he scored 17 points to help Boston cruise.

Al Jefferson scored 23 points for the Timberwolves. But he shot just 8-of-20 and the Timberwolves were shooting 23 percent heading into the fourth quarter before finishing at 31 percent.

The Celtics outscored Minnesota 35-10 in the decisive third quarter, with Garnett putting away two alley-oop passes and throwing down two more dunks to the delight of hundreds of fans wearing his No. 5 Celtics jersey and still more sporting his old blue No. 21.

Garnett was injured in Boston's only game here last season. That kept him from playing in the arena he called home for 12 brilliant seasons.

Giants Burress will be a game-time decision Sunday

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP)—The chances of Plaxico Burress making another winning touchdown catch this weekend at the University of Phoenix Stadium are questionable at best.

The New York Giants' star receiver was limited at practice Friday because of an injury to his right hamstring and he will be a game-time decision on Sunday when the Super Bowl champions play the Arizona Cardinals.

"Knowing me, as of right now, I will play, but like I said you have to be smart about it because it is a hamstring," Burress said after practice. "The weather is going to be cold out here for the rest of the season and hamstrings really don't normally do well in the cold weather. So like I said, I am just going to make the decision based on how I feel when we get out there and warm up on Sunday."

Burress tweaked the hamstring in practice Wednesday and he did not work out Thursday. His hamstring was a little sore after practice Friday, but it did not bother him when he jogged.

"It is a different ballgame when you are out there making moves and sprinting and stuff," Burress added.

Coach Tom Coughlin listed Burress as questionable for the game, which will be the Giants' first at the Arizona stadium since beating the New England Patriots 17-14 in the Super Bowl in February.

Burress caught a winning 13-yard pass from Eli Manning in the left corner of the end zone with 35 seconds to play.

"I don't even know what corner it was," Burress said. "I don't know, man, I was running and turning around and doing so much on that play that I don't even remember what corner it was. I was so out of it that game. I was just happy that we won."

Burress has shown the ability to play with pain. He played almost the entire season last year with an ankle injury that prevented him from practicing.

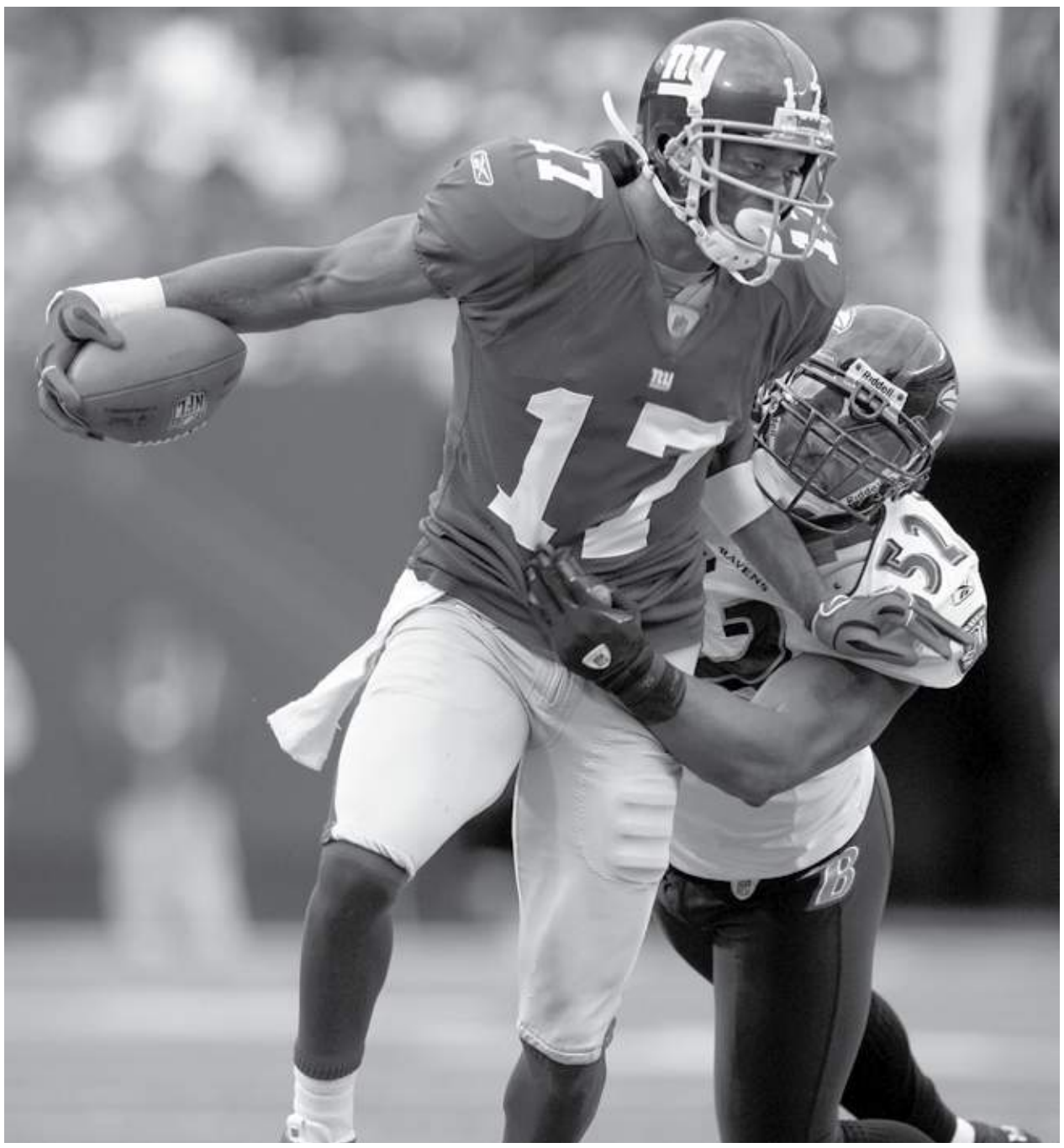
Coincidentally, Burress injured a knee a week before the Super Bowl and could not practice. He had two catches for 27 in the championship game.

"I think that place has a hex on me a little bit, when it comes to game week, but I don't know," he said. "It is unfortunate that it happened, but I am in good spirits about it and it is not serious. But then again, I know how these hamstring things go. You just have to take it day to day and rest. When I am ready to go, I will see."

Burress said a hamstring is a lot different from an ankle or knee injury. He said the last time he had a hamstring injury, he missed six games with the Pittsburgh Steelers. However, he said that pull was worse.

"It is not something that you can cover up or anything like that," Burress said. "It is one of the things that makes my body go, so like I said, if I am not able to do the things that I am capable of going out and doing, it is going to be very obvious."

Burress has 35 catches for 454 yards and four touchdowns, but his receptions have declined steadily since catching 15 passes in the first two games. He has gotten double coverage in almost every game since and he has caught no more than three passes in the last five games.



AP

New York Giants wide receiver Plaxico Burress (17) is tackled by Baltimore Ravens linebacker Ray Lewis (52) during the second quarter of their NFL football game at Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J., Sunday, Nov. 16, 2008.

NFL BRIEFS

NFL: Pacman can practice Monday

IRVING, Texas (AP)—The NFL confirmed Friday that suspended cornerback Adam "Pacman" Jones can join the Dallas Cowboys on Monday and that he can play again Dec. 7 against Pittsburgh—but only if he stays on his best behavior. Commissioner Roger Goodell issued a brief statement Friday confirming the details of Jones' return, noting that it can only happen "if he avoids any further incidents and fully complies with each and every condition that has been established for him." Those conditions were not outlined, although it's believed that he must keep up with the aftercare of the alcohol rehabilitation program he underwent since being suspended Oct. 14. The statement also noted that "Commissioner Goodell's decision was based on the recommendations of clinical experts." Jones was suspended from the entire 2007 season because of repeated run-ins with the law. Traded to Dallas and given another chance by Goodell, Jones played six games before getting punished again. By missing the next two games, this will become a six-game penalty, making it 22 of a possible 28 games he'll have been forced to sit out. Cowboys owner Jerry Jones revealed the commissioner's decision Wednesday. The league office had been mum about the reinstatement until issuing a three-sentence release Friday afternoon.

Witness: Vick put family pets in with pit bulls

RICHMOND, Va. (AP)—Michael Vick put family pets in rings with pit bulls and thought it was funny watching the trained killers injure or kill the helpless dogs, a witness told federal investigators during the dogfighting investigation that brought Vick down. In a 17-page report filed Aug. 28, 2008, by case agent James Knorr of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and released Friday under the Freedom of Information Act, a person identified as confidential witness No. 1 said Vick placed pets in the ring against pit bulls owned by "Bad Newz Kennels" at least twice and watched as the pit bulls "caused major injuries." The witness said Vick and co-defendants Purnell Peace and Quanis Phillips "thought it was funny to watch the pit bull dogs belonging to Bad Newz Kennels injure or kill the other dogs." Vick was sentenced to 23 months in prison in Dec. 2007, and is due to be released from the federal prison at Leavenworth, Kan., on July 20, 2009. He returned to Virginia on Thursday and is being held in Hopewell pending his appearance in Surry County Circuit Court on Tuesday, where he is expected to plead guilty to two felony charges but receive a suspended sentence. The report, which has some names and other information redacted to protect some of the parties involved, also details the killing of several dogs at property Vick owned on Moonlight Road in Surry County in mid-April 2007, just days before the first search warrant was executed on the property, turning a drug investigation into the one that sent Vick to prison.

Duke coasts past Michigan

NEW YORK (AP)—Mike Krzyzewski roused the Duke Blue Devils on Friday and headed for Madison Square Garden, long before they were set to play Michigan in the 2K Sports Classic.

The reason was simple: Even though Duke practices against a variety of defenses every day, rarely do they see the confounding 1-3-1 zone that Wolverines coach John Beilein so relishes.

The extra hour of work certainly paid off.

Nolan Smith scored 16 points, Kyle Singler had 15 and the No. 10 Blue Devils coasted to a 71-56 victory over the surprising Wolverines in the championship game Friday night.

"Preparation with this team is huge," said Singler, who also had eight rebounds, four assists and was the tournament MVP. "We just put that game plan to use on the court—play hard and execute as much as possible."

Gerald Henderson added 12 points for the Blue Devils, who won their four games in the 2K Sports Classic by an average of 28.5 points. Duke has won seven straight in-season tournament games after sweeping through the Maui Invitational last season.

Manny Harris scored 25 points to lead Michigan (3-1), which will get another crack at the Blue Devils (5-0) when they visit Ann Arbor on Dec. 6. DeShawn Sims added 10 points off the bench.

"I wish we would have made some shots earlier and we'd have made a better game of it," Beilein said. "We have a couple guys in a funk and we have to get them out of it. When we do that, I think you will see a better team than what you saw in the second half."

In the consolation game earlier in the night, Alfred Aboya and Darren Collison led No. 4 UCLA to a 77-60 victory over Southern Illinois.

Singler struggled early in the Blue Devils' semifinal win over Southern Illinois, scoring all 13 of his points in the second half. But he was on target early in this one, going 5-for-8 from the field and playing everything from the post to shooting guard.

"He's one of the best players in the country," Krzyzewski said.

The game figured to hinge on Michigan's ability to slow down Duke's high-flying offense with that plodding, grind-it-out zone defense.

It worked for at least a few minutes, until Smith and freshman Elliot Williams combined for eight straight points and gave Duke a 25-15 lead. The Wolverines eventually switched to a man-to-man defense, but it only kept the game close for a while.

The Blue Devils pushed the advantage to 47-33 on a basket by Lance Thomas a few minutes into the second half. Harris tried vainly to keep the Wolverines in it, hitting a 3-pointer and dunking on a break, but Jon Scheyer made three free throws moments later and Singler hit a pull-up 3 from the wing to push the lead back to 15.

Michigan never managed to get much closer than that, the veteran Blue Devils using deft passing and gritty inside play to keep the young Wolverines at bay.

"Give them credit," Beilein said. "They are no slouches defensively. They are a good team and they showed it last night and the whole tournament."

Still, Beilein has plenty of reasons to be proud of his team. After struggling to a 10-22 finish in his first season in Ann Arbor, the Wolverines toppled the Bruins in the tournament semifinals and gave the Blue Devils a tussle before finally succumbing.

The performance Friday night was all the more impressive considering the setting.

Duke has won 14 straight in November and improved to 108-16 in the season's first month, including 94-10 under Krzyzewski. His teams are 17-6 at the Garden, where another heavily pro-Duke crowd showed up in droves to see the title game of the tournament benefiting Coaches vs. Cancer.

"I don't think we were in a position to be upset. I thought we played well out here," Krzyzewski said. "You can't allow a team to be in a position to win and we are playing not to lose. That is the attitude we have tried to have on our teams all along."

Rollers to compete in Guam Thanksgiving caging

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Three Saipan Rollers team will be competing in the Barrigada Basketball Club 2008 Annual Invitational Thanksgiving Basketball Tournament in Guam this week.

Rollers coach Joe Diaz said they will be fielding teams in the 14-and-under, 16-and-under, and 18-and-under division of the Thanksgiving caging, which will run from Nov. 26 to 30.

Diaz added that the Saipan Rollers will be competing against teams from other villages in Guam, such as Yigo, Dededo, Agana, Hagat, Hagatna, Tamuning, Yona, Mangilao, Asan, Inarajan, Umatac, and Tumon.

"The kids are very excited to go to Guam, as this will be their first tournament in more than four months," Diaz said.

Diaz will be calling the shots for the 16-and-under team, which is composed of Juluis Reyes, Jake Guerrero, Ian Benavente, Aaron Agtarap, Joseph Baza, Brandon Aurelio, Rainier Leon Guerrero, Jomar Danar, and Jared Ano.

The two other teams will be handled by Diaz's assistants—Paul Camacho and Vince Teregeyo.

Camacho will be coaching the 14-and-under team, which will be bannered by Lawrence Deleon Guerrero. Joining him are Ken Orejolo, Lester Vertudez, Brian Kim, David Diaz, Anzuko Halstead, and Darren Gabrido.

Vince Teregeyo will assist Diaz in coaching the 18-and-under squad, which is composed of Zach Tudela, Luizi Tudela, Ham Hambrose, Wens Namelo, Don Teregeyo, Don Brennan, Tom Castro, Josh Lizama, and Albert Camacho.

Meanwhile, Diaz would like to thank Shell Marianas for supporting the Saipan Rollers campaign in Guam. The Rollers also acknowledged the assistance of Wings Travel Agency, D & D Rent-A-Car in Guam, Reps. Ray Yumul and Dave Apatang, and the parents of the players.

The first batch of Saipan Rollers players going to Guam left yesterday, while the remaining cagers are expected to leave Saipan tomorrow.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The Rollers' Don Teregeyo, center, is seen here going for a shot against the Sixers' Nathan Flores, left, during last month's Rotary caging at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium. Teregeyo and other players from three Saipan Rollers team will be competing in Guam next week.

Pacquiao floors big sparring partner

LOS ANGELES, California—Oscar De La Hoya, better take note.

Pound-for-pound king Manny Pacquiao showed on Thursday that his granite fists pack as much power at a heavier weight as he knocked down a bigger sparmate at the Wild Card Gym here.

Pacquiao unleashed a big left hook that found the jaw of Arron "Energizer" Robinson, sending the welterweight prospect on the seat of his pants and eliciting a roar from the small gym crowd. The knockdown came on the heels of a discontinued plyometrics program that the Filipino trainers found to be doing more harm than good to the Pacman.

Pacquiao also did six rounds against chief sparmate Rashad Holloway and three rounds opposite Michael Dellas, Jr.

In an interview with 8countnews.com, Holloway said that Pacquiao's power was hardly affected by the RP ring icon's ascension to the welterweight ranks and that De La Hoya will get a taste of it in their Dec. 6 Dream Match in Las Vegas.

"Honestly, I was shocked by his power," Holloway said. "I guarantee you he'll stun Oscar at some point during the fight. Stevie Forbes was able to touch Oscar. Oscar's not that good against southpaws. I think Manny will be able to touch him a whole lot."

Trainer Freddie Roach allowed Pacquiao to spar only eleven rounds Thursday.

$550K tickets for friends

In tickets alone, Pacquiao revealed that he has already spent about $550,000 (roughly P27,500,000) to be given away to friends who will be flying in to watch his December 6 "Dream Match" against Oscar De la Hoya.

In an interview at his Palazzo residence here, Pacquiao informed that these friends include politicians, celebrities and others whose ticket he will be shouldering once they come for the fight.

"Yan ang current expenses ko sa ticket lang. Kasali na dyan mga politicians, artista at sila lahat. Mga kaibigan ko lahat," Pacquiao stated, adding that the figure can still balloon once more friends show up at the fight.

Pacquiao also added that the figure does not include the tickets that he has purchased for himself, although he did not cite the exact amount.

The Visayan Daily Star has quoted Pacquiao's personal secretary Bren Evangelio as saying that the boxing icon had shouldered in the past Bacolod City Mayor Evelio Leonardia's travel expenses, ticket for the fight and hotel accommodation, except for his pocket money.

The clarification, according to the report, was made after a Commission on Audit report distributed to the media by some quarters recently, stated that in 2005 alone, the city government spent P262,273,00.84 for payment/reimbursement of traveling expenses. ***(PDI)***

AP

Manny Pacquiao, right, spars with his trainer Freddie Roach, left during a media workout in Los Angeles Monday, Nov 17, 2008.

HEO

From Page 28

first since competing in Japan in September. He did not play in the 2008 NMITA Fall Classic Championships and had to have scrimmages with Nicolas Son, Race, and a former U.S. collegiate player now residing on Saipan to be in shape.

Heo admitted he is not 100-percent fit for the tournament, but he has been recovering well since sustaining an ankle injury on his left foot in a tournament in New Caledonia in summer.

The injury was aggravated in August when Heo played in the 2008 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships in Fiji and lost to Lorenzo Pineda of Vanuatu in the finals of the boys' 18-and-under division.

After the Fiji trip, he went to Japan and the injury affected his campaign in the Land of the Rising Sun. He lost both opening games in two tournaments in Japan.

Heo took several weeks of rest when he returned to Saipan mid-September before resuming training in preparation for the ITF events in the Philippines.

"I hope the two tournaments in the Philippines will help me return to tough form and get ranking points once I make it to the main draw," said Heo, who has been wearing braces on both ankles since returning from his Fiji trip.

Race said the injury has slowed down Heo's game a bit so he has to focus more on his service game to make up for that disadvantage.

"One of Ji Hoon's potent weapon is his speed. He really moves fast, but since he got injured, he slowed down a bit. In the past two months, we've been working on his serves as in this kind of tournament (ITF event) and with a limited footwork, you have to come out with big serves," Race said.

"I wish he performs well in the tournaments in the Philippines and gets his confidence back," Race added.

MAGNIFICENT

From Page 28

The Nov. 15 Eagle Ray race was SSC's second this year.

In January, 15 swimmers joined the 7K race with Moran among the top finisher.

The event was dubbed Eagle Ray 7K Ocean Swim because of the prevalence of eagle rays in the route of the swim. Locals and tourists alike call the area Eagle Ray City.

The race is one of the three events SSC had lined up before the year ends.

Yesterday, SSC hosted the 2008 Annual All Schools Championships. Results of the meet will be published in the *Saipan Tribune* tomorrow.

The last event for SSC before the year ends will be the 5th Annual Jingle Bell Run which will be held on Dec. 10.

The 5K fun run will start at the Garapan Fishing Base and end at the pavilion in Kilili Beach.

Registration is $10.

For more information, contact Lisa Kimball at 322-7130 or send an email at Coach@SaipanSwimClub.com.

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New York	6	6	.500	5
Philadelphia	6	6	.500	5
Toronto	6	6	.500	5
New Jersey	5	6	.455	5 1/2

Southeast Division

Orlando	9	3	.750	_
Atlanta	8	4	.667	1
Miami	6	6	.500	3
Charlotte	3	8	.273	5 1/2
Washington	1	9	.100	7

Central Division

Cleveland	9	3	.750	_
Detroit	8	4	.667	1
Indiana	5	6	.455	3 1/2
Milwaukee	6	8	.429	4
Chicago	5	7	.417	4

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Houston	8	5	.615	_
New Orleans	6	5	.545	1
San Antonio	6	6	.500	1 1/2
Dallas	6	7	.462	2
Memphis	4	8	.333	3 1/2

Northwest Division

Denver	8	4	.667	_
Portland	8	5	.615	1/2
Utah	8	5	.615	1/2
Minnesota	2	9	.182	5 1/2
Oklahoma City	1	12	.077	7 1/2

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	9	1	.900	_
Phoenix	8	5	.615	2 1/2
Golden State	5	6	.455	4 1/2
Sacramento	5	9	.357	6
L.A. Clippers	2	10	.167	8

Yesterday's Games

Orlando 100, Indiana 98, OT
Houston 103, Washington 91
Philadelphia 89, L.A. Clippers 88
Atlanta 88, Charlotte 83
New Jersey 129, Toronto 127, OT
Boston 95, Minnesota 78
San Antonio 119, Utah 94
Milwaukee 104, New York 87
Dallas 91, Memphis 76
New Orleans 105, Oklahoma City 80
Portland 117, Sacramento 96
Chicago 115, Golden State 110
L.A. Lakers 104, Denver 90

NBA LEADERS

Scoring

	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
James, Clev.	12	123	98	354	29.5
Wade, Mia.	12	117	96	338	28.2
Bosh, Tor.	11	99	83	281	25.5
Johnson, Atl.	11	101	46	278	25.3
Nowitzki, Dall.	12	104	75	296	24.7
Bryant, LAL	9	79	52	219	24.3
Granger, Ind.	9	73	51	219	24.3
Stoudemire, Phoe.	12	92	95	279	23.3
Duncan, S.A.	11	104	43	251	22.8
Carter, N.J.	10	79	51	226	22.6
Jefferson, Minn.	10	97	32	226	22.6
Jackson, G.S.	11	79	63	241	21.9
Durant, OKC.	11	94	43	237	21.5
Roy, Port.	12	87	69	255	21.3
Pierce, Bos.	12	72	84	253	21.1
Howard, Orl.	11	81	69	231	21.0
Butler, Wash.	9	66	47	187	20.8
Paul, N.O.	10	68	66	207	20.7
Anthony, Den.	10	68	60	206	20.6
Gordon, Chi.	12	84	56	247	20.6

FG Percentage

	FG	FGA	PCT
Nene, Den.	70	107	.654
Howard, Orl.	81	136	.596
O'Neal, Phoe.	63	106	.594
Haslem, Mia.	61	104	.587
Gasol, Mem.	49	84	.583
Stoudemire, Phoe.	92	158	.582
Kaman, LAC	66	115	.574
Diaw, Phoe.	47	83	.566
Boozer, Utah	99	177	.559
Parker, S.A.	55	99	.556

Rebounds

	G	OFF	DEF	TOT	AVG
Biedrins, G.S.	11	59	99	158	14.4
Howard, Orl.	11	57	92	149	13.5
Randolph, N.Y.	11	40	97	137	12.5
Boozer, Utah	12	43	97	140	11.7
Bosh, Tor.	11	32	89	121	11.0
Kaman, LAC	11	38	81	119	10.8
Brand, Phil.	11	30	86	116	10.5
Bogut, Mil.	13	43	94	137	10.5
Jefferson, Minn.	10	24	79	103	10.3
Duncan, S.A.	11	33	80	113	10.3

Assists

	G	AST	AVG
Paul, N.O.	10	119	11.9
Calderon, Tor.	9	79	8.8
Kidd, Dall.	12	99	8.3
B. Davis, LAC	10	80	8.0
Wade, Mia.	12	94	7.8
Nash, Phoe.	11	82	7.5
Duhon, N.Y.	11	79	7.2
James, Clev.	12	83	6.9
Rondo, Bos.	12	80	6.7
Jackson, G.S.	11	72	6.5

By The Associated Press

Rollers to compete in Guam Thanksgiving caging

Three Saipan Rollers team will be competing in the Barrigada Basketball Club 2008 Annual Invitational Thanksgiving Basketball Tournament in Guam this week.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Knicks set themselves up for 2010 with 2 deals

The New York Knicks traded Zach Randolph and Jamal Crawford in separate deals Friday, parting with their two top scorers to free up coveted salary-cap space for the summer of 2010.

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Heo to join Junior ITF events in RP

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

CNMI junior netter Ji Hoon Heo left for the Philippines yesterday to compete in two ITF tournaments.

Heo in an interview with the *Saipan Tribune* Friday night said he will be participating in the 2008 PHINMA-ITF International Junior Tournament 1 and 2 at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex tennis courts in Malate, Manila.

The first tournament will run from Nov. 25 to Nov. 30, while the second one will be held from Dec. 2 to 6. Both events are Grade 4 tournaments. This type of event offers the least ranking points and is used as an introduction to the ITF Junior Circuit. Grade A (including four Grand Slam events) tournaments has the most points. Grades B and C are for regional championships and international competitions, respectively.

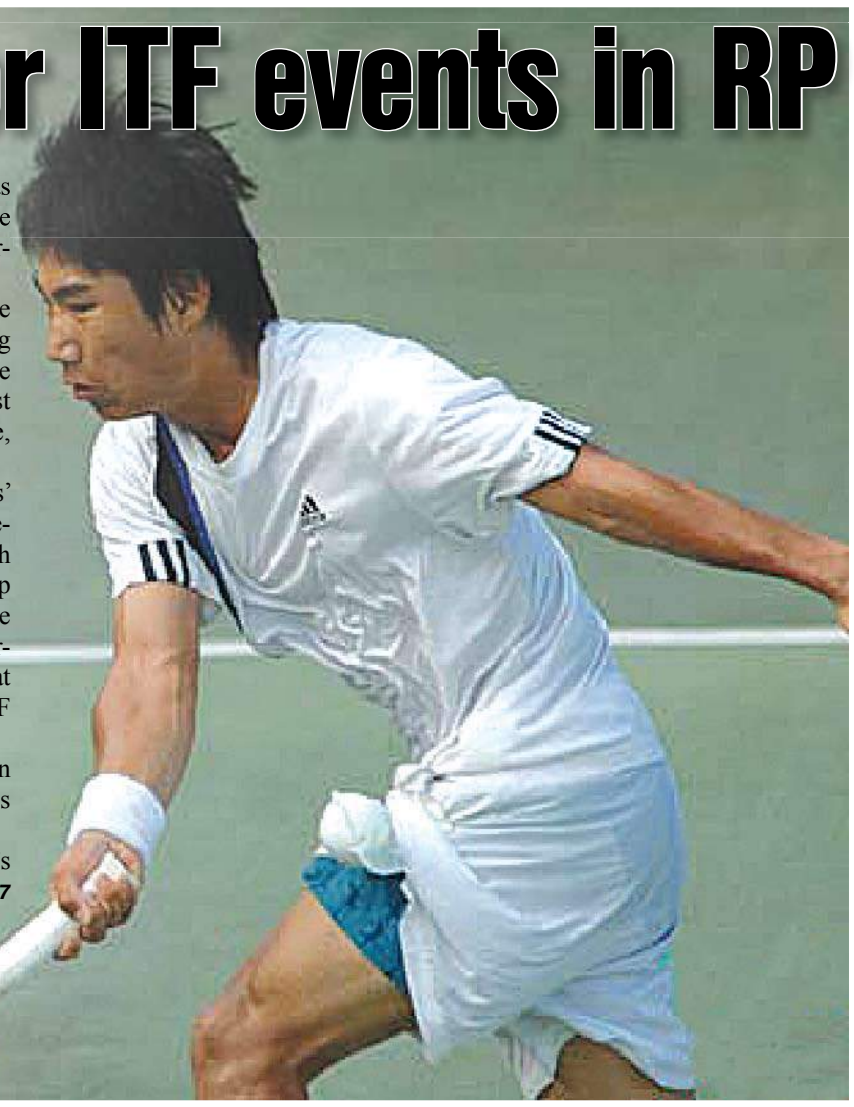
Heo said the tournaments in the Philippines will feature ranking players in the ITF Junior Circuit. He added he will be competing against players from Europe, Asia, and Australia.

The draw in the boys' single has yet to be released, but NMI coach Jeff Race, who played several pickup games against Heo to prepare the Commonwealth's netter for the tournaments in the Philippines, said that among the participants in the ITF event is ranked in the Top 40.

Before Heo makes it to the main draw, he has to win two or three games in the qualifier.

The RP tournaments will be Heo's

See HEO on Page 27



Ji Hoon Heo, seen here in a file photo from a tournament in New Caledonia, left Saipan to play in two tournaments in the Philippines yesterday.

INTERNATIONAL TENNIS FEDERATION

'Magnificent 7' complete Eagle Ray 7K

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Seven swimmers braved the Saipan Swim Club-organized Eagle Ray Ocean Swim 7K race from Pau Pau Beach to Managaha Island on Nov. 15.

The list include Andrew and Grace Kimball, Lester Lapuz, Junior Pamaran, Michael Moran, Hiroaki Nishio, and Monica Yamaguchi.

The trio of Lapuz, Moran and Kimball moved out of the water first, but 14-year-old Lapuz was the first swimmer to reach the finish line. The three SSC swimmers completed the race in two hours, 22 minutes frame.

The remaining four finished the race in 2:34:00.

SSC coach Mike Blasberg, Derek Chambers, and Izumi Yamaguchi paddled alongside the seven participants from Pau Pau to the fabled island.

"It was a relief to reach the island and meet the support staff with refreshments and food," Blasberg said. "Great job swimmers and thanks to everyone that helped make the event possible."

See MAGNIFICENT on Page 27

Grace Kimball and Junior Pamaran near the shores of Managaha Island.

DAN KIMBALL

DAN KIMBALL
Participants and volunteers for the Saipan Swim Club-organized Eagle Ray Ocean Swim 7K race from Pau Pau Beach to Managaha Island pose for a group photo.

OFF THE BENCH

By BOB COLDEEN
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Coldeen is a longtime journalist in the CNMI and is currently the news director of KSPN2

Em Vee Pee

The most valuable player award is by definition argumentative and contentious. Who can argue with that?

Was Albert Pujols really more valuable this year than Ryan Howard? If he was, then why did the Phillies make the playoffs and the Cardinals did not? What good is it to finish in second place when the whole point of the game is to win?

Was Dustin Pedroia (bless his little heart) really more valuable than Kevin Youkilis? You can use statistics to "prove" that Youkilis was actually better. And you can use statistics to "prove" that Pedroia was better. I'm not going to waste my time doing either. But I could.

There are no statistical requirements for the MVP honor, no formulas, no benchmarks, and no computer machinations like they use to finagle the BCS college football ratings into a joke on us.

When Kirk Gibson won the MVP for the Dodgers in 1988 with a pedestrian 76 runs batted in, I didn't complain. I took it like a man.

Wait. I just realized Barry Bonds won four consecutive MVPs from 2001-2004. That ain't fair. Unless the award is for most violating performer.

There is something magical about the tag "MVP" before or after someone's name (especially if it was yours). And once bestowed, it won't ever go away like cash money does.

Well, yes, MLB could yank Bonds' trophies, in theory anyway, but he should keep the three before that (1990, 92-93).

Three-time MVP (two seasons and The Bowl) Kurt Warner is playing like an MVP this season in what is yet another ascension from the ashes. Remember—this is the guy who went straight from working in an Iowa grocery store to the NFL. Who else has done that?

After just one season with the Giants in 2004 sharing the job with rookie Eli Manning, New Yawk junked Warner in favor of the young pedigree. That move proved positive 10 months ago when Peyton's kid brother won Super Bowl XLII MVP.

Tomorrow it's Kurt vs. Eli. MVP vs. MVP.

Sunday Showdown of Pigskin Propellers.

Young gunslinger going up against grizzled vet.

Duel in the Desert

One of them is a sure loser.

Now that's something that can't be argued.

Oh wait. That's not true. There could be a tie.

Ask Donovan McNabb. He knows about a tie game … now.